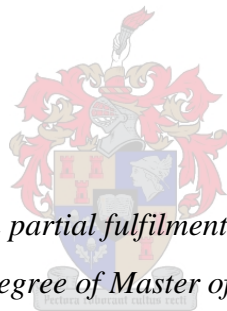


Structural unity and thematic coherence:
The unity of the Philippians letter in light of the imitation theme (Phil 3)

by
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*Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements
For the degree of Master of Theology
In the Faculty of Theology at Stellenbosch University*

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April 2019

Declaration

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained therein is my own original work, that I am the authorship owner thereof (unless to the extent explicitly otherwise stated) and that I have not previously in its entirety or in part submitted it for obtaining any qualification.

Date: April 2019

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Abstract

This study investigates the structural unity and thematic coherence of Philippians, with the concepts of imitation and unity being of particular interest. The methodology used was qualitative, based on Tolmie (2005)'s "rhetorical approach". The results of the rhetorical analysis of Philippians 3 showed that the concept of imitation is being used as a rhetorical strategy to persuade and exhort the Philippian believers.

Philippians 3 maintains consistency in theme and structure without harming the unity in Philippians. A relationship was also found between the imitation in Philippians 3 and the Christ hymn in Philippians 2. In the rhetorical situation faced by the Philippians, Paul uses two concepts in his letter: *mimesis* (imitation) and *kenosis* (emptiness).

The prototype of *mimesis* starts with the hymn. The conclusion of the imitation that Paul is exhorting the Philippians, is Jesus Christ in the hymn. Paul propagates the character of Christ as a model to emulate: self-emptying and self-sacrifice. Paul exhorts the Philippians to take up the character of Christ and persuades the Philippians to imitate Christ.

Paul's exhortation to the Philippians is not abstract. He interpreted *kenosis* with historical and concrete actions that could be imitated by those who wanted to follow Jesus. The Philippians were urged to not only follow the example of Paul, but also that of Timothy and Epaphroditus, who were models of excellence. Imitating the death of Christ on this cross is foundational to Paul's life. Paul wanted to teach the Philippians and others in history. Christians today are urged to have the same character as that of Christ – a prototype for imitation.

Opsomming

Hierdie studie ondersoek die strukturele eenheid en tematiese samehang van Filippense, met die konsepte van nabootsing en eenheid wat van besondere belang was. Die metodologie wat in hierdie studie gebruik is, was kwalitatief, gebaseer op Tolmie (2005) se “retoriese benadering”. Die resultate van die retoriese analise van Filippense 3 het getoon dat die konsep van nabootsing gebruik is as 'n retoriese strategie om die gelowiges in Filippense te oorreed en aan te moedig.

Filippense 3 handhaaf konsekwentheid in tema en struktuur sonder om die eensgesindheid in Filippense te benadeel. 'n Verband is ook gevind tussen die nabootsing in Filippense 3 en die Christus-lied in Filippense 2. In die retoriese situasie wat die Filippense in die gesig staar, gebruik Paulus twee konsepte in sy brief: *mimesis* (nabootsing) en *kenosis* (leegheid).

Die prototipe van *mimesis* begin met die lied. Die gevolgtrekking van die nabootsing waartoe Paulus die Filippense aanmoedig, is vervat in Jesus Christus se uitbeelding in die lied. Paulus beklemtoon die karakter van Christus as 'n model om na te volg: selfontlediging en selfopoffering. Paulus moedig die Filippense aan om hierdie karakter van Christus op te neem, en oorreed die Filippense om Christus na te boots.

Paulus se vermaning aan die Filippense is nie abstrak nie. Hy interpreteer *kenosis* met historiese en konkrete aksies wat deur diegene wat Jesus wil volg, nageboots kan word. Die Filippense word aangemoedig om nie net die voorbeeld van Paulus te volg nie, maar ook dié van Timoteus en Epafroditos wat modelle van uitnemendheid was. Om die dood van Christus aan die kruis na te volg, is fundamenteel vir Paulus se lewe. Paulus wou die Filippense en ander in die geskiedenis leer. Christene word vandag aangemoedig om dieselfde karakter as dié van Christus te hê – 'n prototipe vir nabootsing.

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Abbreviations

Col.	Colossians
Eph.	Ephesians
Exod.	Exodus
Gal.	Galatians
Heb.	Hebrews
Judg.	Judges
Lk.	Luck
Mk.	Mark
Mt.	Matthew
Phil.	Philippians
Phm.	Philemon
Psa.	Psalms
Rom.	Romans
1 Kgs.	1 Kings
2 Kgs.	2 Kings
1 Sam.	1 Samuel
1 Chr.	1 Chronicles
2 Chr.	2 Chronicles
1 Cor.	1 Corinthians
2 Cor.	2 Corinthians
1 Pet.	1 Peter
1 Thess.	1 Thessalonians
1 Tim.	1 Timothy

2 Tim.	2 Timothy
ABD	Anchor Bible Dictionary
<i>BBR</i>	<i>Bulletin for Biblical Research,</i>
BECNT	Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament
<i>BSac</i>	<i>Bibliotheca Sacra</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
EBC	Expositor's Bible Commentary
<i>ETL</i>	<i>Ephemerides theologicae lovanienses</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JSNT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>
JThSt	<i>The Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>Neotestamentica</i>	<i>Journal of the New Testament Society of South Africa</i>
NICNT	New International Commentary on the New Testament
NIDNTT	New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology
NIGTC	The New International Greek Testament Commentary
<i>NovTSup</i>	<i>Novum Testamentum Supplementary Series</i>
NTC	New Testament Commentary
<i>NTS</i>	<i>New Testament Studies</i>
PNTC	Pillar new Testament Commentary
<i>PRSt</i>	<i>Perspectives in Religious Studies</i>
<i>TynBul</i>	<i>Tyndale Bulletin</i>

Chapter 1

Structural unity and thematic coherence: The unity of the Philippians letter in light of the imitation theme (Phil 3)

1.1 Research Motivation

There are three kinds of problems that are mentioned in Philippians, mainly as unresolved issues: The question of the place where Paul was confined when he wrote this letter, the unity of the letter, and the various forms of opponents mentioned in the letter. There is not a unified view on any of these topics (Carson & Moo 2005:500). One of the most important questions in research on the Philippians letter is whether the letter in its canonical form was one single, homogeneous text or whether it was a subsequent compilation of several fragments. The third chapter of Philippians plays an important role in this discussion. One interesting thing is that, although there is no consensus view on any of these matters, most interpreters agree with the view that Paul is the author of the Philippians.

When I asserted the unity of Philippians in the past, I resisted theories of its fragmented nature unconditionally on the basis of my position on the inspiration of the Bible. Looking back, my position was based largely on ignorance. The letters Paul wrote to the churches were gathered from the end of the first century because the letters originally sent to them were sometimes combined. Even if two or three letters were compiled to form the letter to the Philippians, each letter fragment remains a part of the New Testament, and fragmentation theories in themselves do not deny the inspiration of the Bible. The authenticity of the editorial labour or result is not an issue to be determined by the theory of scriptural inspiration.

In this sense, the idea of a unified letter is more convincing than to hold that the letter is merely the result of an arbitrary compilation. The view that Philippians was a composite letter was first raised in the seventeenth century and gained more support as the years passed

(Hawthorne 2015:33). The view that Philippians were composed of two or more letters, which had not yet been clarified after these problems had been raised, led to an attempt to separate Philippians and interpret the different sections accordingly.

There are two main reasons for the claims that Philippians originally existed as several letters. Firstly, the overall argument or epistolary structure in the letter does not follow that of other Pauline epistles (e.g. thanksgiving, doctrine, exhortation, personal news). There seems in fact to be little obvious logic in the overall organization of the argument: “it is very difficult to discern a convincing outline of Philippians, and many conflicting proposals have been made. The very difficulty of recognising a clear purpose and argument continues to raise the question of whether this is indeed written as one letter” (Bockmuehl 1997:21). Secondly, Philippians in its present shape has a number of rough transitions, which have long suggested to scholars the possibility of seams between two, or, more commonly, three different letter fragments. The most severe break clearly occurs at 3:1 where Paul, after his customary concluding travel news and personal commendations (2:19–30), seems to be preparing to end the letter (Reumann 2008:8). In addition, not only is Philippians 3 written in a very different tone, but it is difficult to elucidate the acute aspects of the controversy with (other forms of) Judaism also in the theological tension of theology and ethics and in the righteousness-theology that can be seen in Paul's true work (Doughty 1995:107).

On the other hand, there are scholars who insist on the original unity of Philippians. According to Silva (2005:13), supporting the literary integrity of the letter are some interesting features, such as the striking verbal parallels between chapter 3 and earlier sections (cf. esp. 2:6–11 with 3:7–11). Of Particular significance is the coherence that is achieved by beginning and ending the main body of the epistle with similar phraseology. Discourse analysis and rhetorical criticism have contributed positively to identifying literary consistency issues. Garland (1985), one of the most important voices in this field, holds the firm position that Philippians is literally a unified letter.

The debate over the unity of Philippians is not only a question of reconstructing Paul's missionary diary in connection with historical context, but also the problem of the central

theme of Paul's theology in Philippians. Therefore, I will propose to address the unity of Philippians by relying on both the text and a specific motif in the text.

1.2 Problem Statement

In studying the Pauline epistles, scholars have used the method and tools of rhetorical criticism to examine Paul's letter in more detail (Betz 1975; Jewett 1986; Kennedy 1987; Porter and Olbricht 1993; Mack 1994; Watson 1994; Walton 1995; Tolmie 2005). Rhetorical criticism seeks to understand how the traditional debate style and structure used in the Greco and Roman world influenced the composition of early Christian literature. The rhetoric of the Greco-Roman world was applied particularly to the Pauline epistles. There are a number of views on what kind of rhetoric Paul's specific correspondence belongs to, which continue to create problems. Whether or not the Pauline style exactly matches the pattern of Greek rhetoric is also questionable. Some positions regarding the application of rhetorical criticism in detail can lead to the problem of forcing the rhetorical form. After all, "[m]any studies have focused on the rhetorical structure of the letter, but with divergent and contradictory results. In the practice of the rhetorical criticism of Paul's letters the Latin terms of classical rhetoric are used to designate the parts of the structure of the letter." (Hansen 2009:13). Fee (1995:16) also supports this position: "The Latin terms of classical rhetoric are used to designate the parts of the structure of the letter. The description of the form of Paul's argumentation with the Latin terminology of these handbooks often tend to obfuscate rather than clarify the meaning of Paul's letter".

It is true that there are negative views on the use and value of rhetoric in biblical studies, but this is not to say that rhetorical approaches are without value. The rhetorical approach reminds us that these letters are carefully structured and crafted. New proposals would not be considered seriously if Paul's letters were organized poorly. Moreover, Paul was probably familiar with such rhetoric to some extent, since he appears to have been an educated person. The impact of Hellenism was widely evident, even in Palestine (Schreiner 2011:23).

Even if he was not entirely familiar with Greek rhetoric (which is unlikely), it still cannot be denied that there are rhetorical features in Paul's letters. According to rhetorical handbooks, effective communicative elements have also been used by those who were unfamiliar with Greek rhetoric (Esler 1998:59). Therefore, it is necessary to study the social and historical background of the text through rhetorical criticism, analyze the language and grammar of the text itself and also its logic and argument.

The scholars who had previously analyzed rhetoric in Philippians hastened to fit the text into the framework of classical rhetoric (Betz 1972; Watson 1997; Witherington 2011). Philippians were also put into the category of classical rhetoric. The work of the scholars attempts to reveal the precise rhetorical conventions in the letter, with extensive citation of ancient rhetorical theory. The thoroughness of their work is laudable but the letter should not be enforced in the category of classical rhetoric. As a result, the prejudice regarding rhetorical style could become an obstacle to understanding the meaning and practical purpose of the theological matter in Paul's letter. For this reason, I will not use the terms in the classical rhetorical handbook to define the structure of Philippians. I am going to use of method of Tolmie, using it as methodological approach – even though classical rhetorical terminology and categories will be used, as Tolmie indeed also does.

When Philippians is viewed as one unified letter without interpolations, the notable thematic continuity between the different parts of the letter is evident. The theme's progress in the faith (1:25; 2:12-14; 3:12-16), humility (2:2, 5-8; 3:4-8) and the final victory of Christ (2:9-11; 3:20-21) stand out. The relevance of a particular theme in each chapter plays an important role in understanding the unity of Philippians. The discovery of unifying themes can provide a better basis for accepting Philippians as one unified letter.

In Philippians 3, I will examine the rhetorical functions and characteristics of imitation and examine what the author ultimately tries to persuade his audience about. I would like to answer the following specific questions:

1. Is Philippians a letter? Is it composed of two or more letters?

2. How does the rhetorical function of imitation appear throughout Philippians?

1.3 Hypothesis

The most important thing in this thesis is to recognize Philippians' literary style as a letter. Philippians 3 is viewed as an integral part of the whole argument. The purpose of the Philippians letter is not only to have a clear central message to convey to the recipients, but also a logical and unified structure. In other words, the consistency and unity of Philippians can be established and explained, which enables us to organize and understand the purpose of the letter. O'Brien (1991:35-38) determined that the unity of the letter is linked to the integration of the letter and tried to find an integrated purpose in dealing with the goal of the letter.

It is presupposed that the rhetorical practice of Paul, who is trying to convince recipients and to ensure that the central message is effectively communicated, is reflected throughout the letters. In this thesis, I propose that the theme of imitation in Philippians 3 is a rhetorical heading in describing the argumentative position of Philippians, and that this theme is consistently described in Philippians.

The premise of imitation in Philippians has its background in imitation philosophy¹ that has been maintained for hundreds of years in Greek philosophy and which was deeply embedded in peoples' lives at the time. The rhetoric of imitation has become a philosophical theory, and

¹ For Plato, Idea is a reality, and the present world in which we live is nothing but a humble and imperfect imitation of Idea. For him, Idea is the form (εἶδος) and type (παράδειγμα). The phenomenon is an imperfect world and only a model and a shadow. However, Idea is a totally impractical real world, a prototype of phenomenon world and an ideal world. Since there is a world of typos called Idea, reality is interpreted and understood because it is involved and related to the world of Idea. Therefore, in Greek philosophy, cosmological structures exist in the form of prototypes and copies. Time is an imitation of eternity, and what is visible is an imitation of what is invisible. Since human being is the imitation of God, man must be a practitioner of imitation. Thus, the ideological influence of cosmological imitation in Greek philosophy is very large (Ferguson 1999:315).

influenced both the New Testament writer and the literature. However, the contents of the Greek philosophy is completely different even if it agrees in the use of words and structure.

The theme of imitation is important as a result of the rhetorical situation in Philippians. It is closely related to the rhetorical situation and is the key to solving the problems that the Philippian believers have to face. The opponents began to influence the Philippian congregations and caused tensions in the community (1:27-30, 2:1-11, 3:2-21, 4:2-3)². According to Paul's judgment, the opponents brought confusion about the right approach to believe in Christ which differed from righteousness (3:3-9) and also presented a false understanding of the meaning of suffering (3:10-11).

Paul appealed to the Philippians to be cautious of the opponents and to follow his example as a model for following Christ by remembering the meaning and proclamation of the cross. That was where the Philippian believers have faced adversity, have lost their sense of joy, and were tempted to give up the struggle. Paul is persuading and reassuring the Philippian believers by using an important rhetorical theme of imitation. So I propose that the theme of imitation is an important theme and its use contributes to our understanding of the problems that relates to the structural unity of Philippians 3.

Furthermore, the theme of imitation is based on Philippians 2:5-11. Paul imitates Christ as the prototype of conception. Through his autobiographical confession (3:4-14), Paul is witnessing that he himself is following the form (μορφή) of Christ's Person. The theme of imitation is a direct connection with the Christ hymn in Philippians 2, and it will reveal the thematic coherence in Philippians 2 and 3 (2:5-11; 3:4-16, 20-21). In the end, imitating Paul is imitating Christ, and the subject of imitation is a bridge that proves the unity of Philippians 2 and Philippians 3. The theme of imitation is at the core of Paul's theology in Philippians, and a central theme of the unity of Philippians.

² The identification of the opponents alluded to in Philippians is the subject of a vast amount of secondary literature. Current research proposes at least eighteen different identities for the opponents (Hansen 2009:28). I define the opponents as Jewish Christians who lead Gentile Christians to follow Jewish rituals in Philippians 3.

In my thesis, I will analyze the relationship between kenosis and mimesis in the Christ hymn and clarify what Paul specifically said to imitate. The purpose of this analysis is to show that the goal of Paul's argument was to prove that Christ's imitation had a final purpose. In addition to the above, I will also look at the rhetorical strategies and rhetorical effects of the phrase "join in imitating me" (17) through an overall rhetorical analysis of Philippians 3. The aim here is to find out what the function of imitation is and the reason for Paul's use of imitation, particularly in the controversial setting of Philippians 3. The theme of imitation requires special attention here because it is central to Paul's theology in Philippians, and also because it demonstrates the unity of Philippians.

The problem of consistency and integrity of the correspondence is deeply connected with the theme of imitation. The consistency and unity of Philippians can be explained through the theme of imitation. These explanations help to organize and understand the purpose of the letter. O'Brien (1991:35-38) determined that the unity of the letter is linked to the integration of the letter and tried to find an integrated purpose in dealing with the purpose of the letter.

1.4 Methodology

The methodology of rhetorical criticism of Philippians will follow Tolmie (2005)'s proposals in *Persuading the Galatians*. In his first chapter, Tolmie (2005, 36-39) explains the approach that was followed in analyzing the letter to the Galatians. After constructing the rhetorical situation, he formulates his "minimal theoretical framework", which consists of the following aspects:

- The identification of the dominant rhetorical strategy in a particular section by answering two questions: "How can one describe Paul's primary rhetorical objective in the section?" and "How does he attempt to achieve this objective?"
- The analysis of the section by focusing on the types of arguments Paul uses and why they are effective, or by describing the way he argues to persuade his audience. Exegetical issues

are discussed when there is no agreement on the meaning of a specific phrase or expression of rhetorical significance.

- The identification of the rhetorical techniques used to enhance the impact of his communication.
- A description of the way in which the argument of the letter as a whole has been organized. Of course, this aspect can only be addressed once the analysis of the entire letter has been completed (Snyman 2006:260).

There is a considerable difference between existing rhetorical methodologies and this Tolmie-method. Previous studies applied the category of classical rhetoric to Paul's letters and forced scholars to look for other ways of describing the persuasive force of his letters. However, Tolmie's methodology is to analyze Paul's argumentation by way of a text-centered approach, in which the letter itself serves as the starting-point for the analysis. The important thing is not to fit the Philippian text into a rhetorical structure, but to identify the rhetorical techniques that Paul uses to increase the influence of his communication. Therefore, through the methodology of Tolmie, Paul's rhetorical strategy is explored by reconstructing the text itself without forcing the category of ancient rhetoric onto it.

Firstly I will aim to apply the methodology of rhetorical criticism to Philippians 3 through Tolmie's methodology. Then I will analyze the rhetorical situations and analyze the rhetorical functions and characteristics of the rhetoric.

This thesis suggests that the following points should also be considered in order to solve the problems pertaining to the unity of Philippians. Paul was also nurtured in the soil of Jewish, Greek and Roman cultures and influenced by rhetoric, which is central to Greek education. That is why Philippians attempts to understand rhetoric under the premise that it reflects Greco and Roman rhetoric.

In fact, in rhetoric, the message is formed through a close relationship between the rhetorical situation and the author's intention. Therefore, I think that the rhetorical approach is the most

appropriate hermeneutical approach with which to address the rhetorical situation of Philippians and the argument in the letter accordingly.

The logic of each chapter is developed and stated as follows: In Chapter 1, I discussed the importance and value of the research, its scope and limitations, provided a description of important terms, and explained my chosen methodology. In Chapter 2, I will investigate research trends that have advocated for the unity and fragmentation theories. Furthermore, while recognizing the limitations of the ensuing discussions and the need for prior rhetorical understanding, Philippians will be understood as a unified letter. In chapter 3, I will analyze Philippians rhetorically based on Tolmie's method of rhetorical criticism. I will prove that the theme and structure of Philippians 3 is important, and that it is closely connected to the whole. In chapter 4, I would like to suggest that by using contemporary rhetorical analysis, the integrity of Philippians itself and the theme of conception, can be viewed as being consistent in Philippians. In addition, the relationship between kenosis and mimesis is clarified in the situation of conflict, and the letter's consistency is demonstrated through its function. The conclusion summarizes my research. I evaluate the value of the results of the research and propose a new study on the subject of embedding in Philippians.

This study analyzes those elements of Greco and Roman rhetoric reflected in the Bible on the basis of ancient rhetorical convictions, which was an essential subject of the education system at the time of writing the New Testament. As a result, rhetorical analysis as a Bible interpretation methodology will provide a plausible avenue to deal with the New Testament texts as documents of early Christian social history, as well as their literary composition. Above all, rhetorical considerations will contribute to the outline of the true rhetoric of Paul's letter and will escape the limits of rhetoric by showing that the text itself can be reconstructed precisely beyond the limits of traditional rhetorical criticism. Text-centered rhetorical criticism will focus on the way Paul made his claims, and will help improve the type of argument he uses and the influence of his communication.

The thematic concept-approach plays an important role in explaining the consistency and integration of Philippians, and enables us to organize and understand the purpose of the letter.

Since the theme of imitation is a consistent subject in Philippians, it is clear that there is a basis for the claim of unification. It also allows us to discover the main characteristics of Paul's theology in the claim that the proprietary nature of Paul's theology is lacking in the Philippians. The theme of imitation is important to the discovery of the theology that Paul has maintained and to characterize his rhetoric. Eventually, the thematic concept approach will provide justification for reading Philippians as a unified letter.

Chapter 2

The debate over the literary integrity of the Letter to the Philippians

2.1 Introduction

There is a lot of controversy regarding the literary integrity of the letter to the Philippians and consensus has not yet been reached among scholars. Scholars disagree about whether Philippians is a single letter or several letters that have been edited into one. The multiple-letter theory suggests that the letter is the result of editing several Pauline letter fragments while the single-letter theory holds that Paul wrote coherently according to rhetorical arrangement. There are many reasons for Philippians being a single edited document combining two or more letters, and that is why this argument sounds plausible. This controversy presents a sharp contrast, namely that there is a contradiction between the view that the letter is the result of editing several fragments and the claim that Paul wrote it according to the rhetorical arrangement. The first part of this chapter includes a brief review of the history of the debate and briefly introduces the multiple-letter and the single-letter theories. In conclusion I will aim to present the internal and external evidence from both groups of scholars regarding the literary integrity of Philippians.

2.2 Brief History of Research

Before summarising the controversy surrounding the literary integrity of Philippians, it is worthwhile to briefly explain the starting point and the present state of the debate. Scholars generally support the theory that Philippians is a synthesis of various letters and attribute this theory to Stephanus Le Moune's work of 1685. David Cook exposed the claims of several scholars who were amongst the first to dissect Philippians into two originally separate letters. Cook claimed that Le Moune's study did not express that position, but rather that he believed that Philippians was a single letter (Reed 2005:126).

Le Moune tries to explain why Polycarp maintained that he wrote more than one letter to the community at Philippi. Le Moune points out that there was a situation in which a chapter, or part of a single work published in parts, was seen as a separate work. He suggests that the letter to the Philippians could be divided into two parts. In fact, Le Moune saw the original version of Philippians as one single document. However, he concluded that Polycarp would have known of several letters to the Philippians that had been written separate from the original letter. Thus, Le Moune claims the existence of multiple letters to the Philippians, but his view is contrary to the modern multiple-letter theory. Originally, it was a single letter that was divided into multiple works (Koperski 1993:599).

Heinrichs first dissected the letter to the Philippians into separate letters and is therefore the first proponent of the multi-character theory. He viewed 1:1-3:1 and 4:21-23 as a letter written especially to the Christian community at Philippi and 3:2-4:10 as directed specifically to the community leaders. The most verifiable date for the multiple-letter theory then is 1803, not 1685 (Koperski 1993:600). After Heinrichs, many studies of the multiple-letter theory were carried out actively. In 1914, Symes claimed that Paul had written five letters to Philippi. In general, the two-letter theory was common by 1945. Three letters became more common after 1945 (Reumann 2009).

It has become very common for scholars to argue that Philippians is actually composed of two letters. According to the two-letter hypothesis,

Paul's first letter (1:1-3:1a; 4:2-7, 10-23) expressed his gratitude for the gift; the impact of his imprisonment on the advance of the gospel; and his pastoral concern for unity in the church. The second letter (3:1b-4:1, 8-9) was written after his release from prison during a time when the church was seriously threatened by false teachers.

(Hanse 2009:16)

Then again, some scholars think that the letter to the Philippians is composed of three letters: A, a letter of appreciation as the thank you note (4:10-20); B, the letter from prison (1:1-3:1a;

4:2-7 and 3:21-23; and C, the polemical letter³ (3:1b-4:1, 8-9) (Koester 2007:72-75). Chronologically, the writing of the letters or fragments is unanimously seen to run along the lines of A-C. However, there is disagreement as to the number of letters and exactly which parts constitute such letters.

Despite many scholars having adopted the multiple-letter theory set forth in the 1950s, many scholars still argue for or assume a single-letter theory. In order to more systematically claim the single-letter theory, the methods of rhetorical criticism and epistolary analysis of the letter led to more specific criticism of the multiple-letter theory. The rhetorical and the structural approaches were followed in particular after the publication of Garland's *The Composition and Unity of Philippians* in 1985 (Standhartinger 2008:423-426). Reed's work, "*A discourse Analysis of Philippians (1997)*" is noteworthy. He attempted to analyze the discourse in order to evaluate the literary multiple-letter theory concerning Philippians.

The brief history of the argument presented above provides the background for the following sections. Based on this, I plan to list the disputes over the literary integrity by organizing the contents of the arguments according to specific topics, and presenting the multiple-letter theory first and then the single-letter theory.

2.3 Location of Philippians 3 in the Epistle

Scholars have divided Philippians according to the logical flow of the content of the letter. A summary of this division is presented below.

	Letter A	Letter B	Letter C
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³ Each scholar has a different standard for distinguishing Philippians; for a more detailed introduction, see Reed (1997:146-149).

Barth, G	4:10-20	1:1-3:1, 4:4-7(21-23)	3:2-4:3, 8-9
Beare, F	4:10-20	1:1-3:1, 4:4-7, 21-23	3:2-4:1
Bornkamm, G	4:10-20	1:1-3:1, 4:4-7, 21-23	3:2-4:3, 8-9
Collange, J F	4:10-20 (21-23)	1:1-3:1, 4:4-7(21-23)	3:1b-4:1, 8-9
Dulling-Perrin	4:10-20	1:1-3:1, 4:4-7, 21-23	3:2-4:1, 8-9
Koster, H	4:10-20	1:1-3:1, 4:4-7(21-23?)	3:2-4:3
Lohse, E	4:10-20	1:1-2:30, 4:21-23	3:2-4:9
Marxen, W	4:10-20	1:1-3:1, 4:4-9, 21-23	3:2-4:3
Müller-Bardorff, J	4:10-20	1:1-3:1, 4:(4)5-7(8-9)(21-23)	3:2-4:1(2-3)
Gnilka, J	1:1-3:1a, 4:2-7, 10-23	3:1-4:1, 8-9	
Michael, J H	1:1-3:1a, 3:20-4:23	3:1b-19	
Rahtjen, B D	4:10-20	1:1-2:30, 4:21-23	3:2-4:9
Schenke, H M	4:10-20	1:1-3:1, 4:4-7, 21-23	3:2-4:3, 8-9
Schenk, W	4:10-20	1:1-3:1, 4:4-7	3:2-4:3, 8-9
Schmithale, W	4:10-20	1:1-3:1, 4:4-7	3:2-4:3, 8-9

As Table 1 above illustrates, there is a general consensus among scholars that Philippians is a letter composed of several pieces. This view is supported by the logical flow of the letter. Verses 1:1-3:1 gives an account of Paul's imprisonment and is generally written in a familiar tone. However, in 3:2, the tone suddenly changes, and verses 3:2-21 describe various situations written in a rough and controversial tone. Thus, there is an abrupt change in subject and tone. This is followed by a thank you note for a gift that was received, which concludes the letter (4:10-20). In short, 4:2-9 and 21-23 are somewhat difficult to locate clearly.

For the various reasons presented above, scholars originally viewed 4:10-20 as a separate thank you note and 3:1b-4:1 (4:3) as part of a letter that is directly related to Paul's writings. If these hypotheses are correct, then questions arise concerning the manner and standards used by the editors to compose the present letter of Philippians. There is no description of this part and scholars have attempted to reconstruct them, relying only on the logical flow of the content. In spite of this view, however, there is much evidence to prove that Philippians is a single letter. I accept Philippians as it has been given to us. I will not divide it into three letters, nor relocate any of its parts. In the ensuing discussion, I will provide evidence to support the view that Philippians is a single letter, as well as discuss the multiple-letter theory. Following this, I will offer arguments to substantiate my claim that Philippians is a single letter.

2.4 External evidence that the letter to the Philippians is a composite

Multiple-letter theory

The main discussion we have to look at in the scholarly debate about the multiple-letter theory or the single-letter theory concerns the external evidence claimed for in the multiple-letter theory. In this way, from the ensuing discussion we can understand that the historical basis can be applied differently according to the method of interpretation used and the theological position assumed. Furthermore, historical knowledge and narrative knowledge can be distinguished from each other but cannot be seen as dichotomous in the interpretive process. There are three main external points of evidence that scholars propose for arguing that Philippians comprises of multiple letters (Bockmuehl 1995:70).

First, as mentioned briefly above, Polycarp mentions multiple Philippian letters. Polycarp knew of at least two letters by Paul to the Philippians. He refers to the “letters” (ἐπιστολάς or “epistles”) sent to Philippi by Paul in the plural, which for some suggested a stitched letter. He clearly distinguishes between singular and plural forms and they should be treated as a plural actuality (Schmithals 1972:58). Second, the ancient Syrian stoichiometry from the *Catalogus Sinaiticus* (c 400CE) writes about two letters to Philippi (Rahtjen 1560:168; Fitzmyer 1974:248). Third, it is possible to speculate that Paul sent more than two letters to a

church he loved deeply. If Paul sent two or more letters to the Corinthian church, it stands to reason that he could also have sent several letters to the beloved Philippian church (Hawthorne 2015:33).

Single-letter theory

The preceding arguments highlight the difficulties associated with the single-letter theory and make it possible to think about possibilities of the multiple-letter theory. Nevertheless, it is difficult to conclude on these arguments alone that the single-letter theory is not valid. Based on the multiple-letter theory, the scholars who assert the single-letter theory set out the following consideration in favour of their position.

External evidence is in favour of the single letter theory. According to Lightfoot (1999:76), “The Epistle to the Philippians appears in all the CANONS OF SCRIPTURE during the second century: in the lists of the heretic Marcion and of the Muratorian fragment, as well as in the Old Latin and Peshito Syriac versions”. First of all, the greatest weakness of the multiple-letter theory is the lack of evidence and support of the copies. As Silva points out, not only is there no evidence of copies to support the claim of a multiple-letter theory, but there is rather evidence in support of the single-letter theory:

From the earliest manuscripts (including the late-second-century papyrus text, \mathfrak{P}^{46}) to patristic allusion and through all the later copies of the text, the complete diverse manuscript to Philippians witnesses one letter in the canonical form, without one hint that the letter contains a combination of separate letters written at different times or was ever circulated in a different form.

(Silva 2005:12)

The Chester Beatty Papyrus is a copy that is dated to the second half of the second century or early third century, and the contents of this copy do not show evidence that Philippians existed in a form that differed from the existing form (O’Brien 1991:12). The multiple-letter theory does not solve the question of composition by itself, nor can it rely on the support of a manuscript.

It may be a hypothesis or a different interpretation of a letter by Paul that was sent by Polycarp as a little letter to the Philippian Church. According to Lightfoot (1999:140-142), “Polycarp used plural form of ‘letters’ that was sometimes used in Greek to denote an epistle of great importance, such as the king’s mandate containing multiple directions and injunctions” It may be an expression to convey the importance of the letter or an expression that refers to all letters (Martin 1987:42-43). Also, Polycarp could have used the plural form because of the reference to Paul’s previous suggestion in 4:16 (Garland 1985:154). Then again, the reference to two letters may also be an inference by Polycarp not based on accurate historical data (Wikenhauser 1967:437). Such explanations of the letters referred to by Polycarp suggest that the letter to the Philippians was not necessarily a combination of two or more letters.

The credibility of the reference to the ‘two correspondences’ in the ancient Syrian stoichiometry (*Catalogus Sinaiticus*) can be questioned. The reference to two letters addressed to the Philippians in *Catalogus Sinaiticus* may be a case of duplication and illusion with suspicious historical value. It is not necessary to assume that the church in Philippi sent two or more letters to the Corinthian church. It seems that Paul had reason to send more than two letters to the Corinthian church, though. Paul sent several letters because there were many problems in the Corinthian church and he tried to help. The Philippian church, on the other hand, was a relatively praiseworthy church, so there was no reason to send a letter to help the church. Recalling that the Pauline correspondence had pastoral intent, written to help the early Jesus follower communities, it is understandable that a letter was also sent to the Philippian church.⁴

According to Schnelle (1998:137-138), Polycarp believed that Paul’s letter to the Philippians was written explicitly on the basis of being a single letter. So in the end, even if the copy available to the Eastern Church preserved evidence of previous traditions, it would not be possible to convincingly prove the possibility that at least two letters existed because too much time had passed. According to Hawthorne, external evidence found in traces of the

⁴ In this regard, it is necessary to understand that Paul’s letter to the Philippians is a pastoral letter. Paul often writes to the Jesus-follower community or church to help the church’s pastoral needs. Paul conducted his ministry through letters when situations arose that he could not attend to in person.

early Church fathers' writings refer to a single letter to the Philippians. Thus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Ignatius, Clement of Rome, Polycarp, Irenaeus, and Origen all indirectly acknowledged that Philippians comprised a unified work by Paul (Hawthorne 1999:30-32).

2.5 Internal evidence

Scholars have suggested for a long time that Philippians, in its current form, has a possible seam, which is evidence of joining two or three different letters together. Scholars claim from internal evidence that the flow of Philippians suggests that it is made up of several letters. Traces of multiple letters are found in Philippians 3 and 4, in particular. The common view of scholars who hold the multiple-letter theory is summarised in what follows. The evidence indicating separate pieces of text are 3:2-4:3 and 4:10-20 (Holloway 2017:11). I will present the position of a single letter to refute the opinions of scholars who claim the theory of fragmentation.

2.5.1 Internal evidence that Philippians 3:2-4:3 is a letter fragment

Multiple-letter theory

The internal evidence of dividing up Philippians is where opposition to reading letters as a united unit occurs. Philippians 3 is where clear internal evidence in particular appears. From this, scholars in support of the multiple-letter theory claim that two separate letters are artificially combined. In this regard, Reed has presented evidence from Philippians 3 (2005:131-134) and Holloway has categorised the evidence pointing to the section running from 3:2-4:3, as a separate fragment grounded on three claims:

First, 3:2-4:3 reflects a different set of circumstances than 1:1-3:1. Second, the travel plans described in 2:19-3:1 signal the end of a typical Pauline letter. Third, the abrupt shift in tone between 3:1 and 3:2 marks a later editorial seam.

(Holloway 2017:13)

I want to focus on the third part, which is at the centre of the controversy.

Such first issues are most likely brought up and discussed in relation to the flow of Philippians itself. Many scholars have suggested that Philippians 3 appears to be out of place due to the sudden change in tone compared to the previous passage. It was even suggested that this phrase was a separate sentence inserted after Paul had written his letter (O'Brien 1991:345) because of the contrast with the strikingly positive tone and atmosphere at the beginning of Philippians 3.

The direct connection between Philippians 3:1 and Philippians 4:4 reads smoothly. On the other hand, if we read the current text of Philippians as it is, we encounter the phrase following 3:1 suddenly swerving to admonition in 3:2. This controversial statement continues until 3:21. Paul continues the theme of Philippians 1 and 2 from 4:1 with an exhortation to be united; an admonition to overcome persecution; and the assurance of peace and joy to follow. Because of these thematic changes, 3:2-21 gives the impression of an intrusion. Without this section (3:2-4:3), 3:1 and 4:4 link seamlessly. Some scholars therefore propose that 1:1-3:1 and 4:4-23 comprise the original letter, and 3:2-21 is part of another letter.

While analysing Philippians for internal evidence supporting the multiple-letter theory, scholars focus on the phrase τὸ λοιπόν ("finally"). Paul announces the end of the discourse in Philippians 3 with the adverb τὸ λοιπόν ("finally"). Schmithals has claimed that it belongs to the conclusion of the letter, similar to I Thessalonians 4:1 and II Thessalonians 3:1 (1972:71). The clause to rejoice in the Lord is similarly interpreted as a formal farewell marking the end of the letter (Beare 1969:145-146). The intervening change in the language from joy to violent hysteria leads to a change in tone and inconsistent thinking (Houlden 1970:41). Because of this break in Philippians 3, scholars insist that a fragment of another letter was inserted at this point.

Single-letter theory

We must ask an important question before we can introduce a counter argument for a single-letter theory. Why was it that the editing of the letter was carried out in a crude manner, ignoring the interlaced associations? Although the multiple-letter theory has been presented for the reason that the internal relation of the letter is unclear, the results achieved by editing appear to have disregarded the internal association. If someone had edited the letter, one can argue, it would have been arranged appropriately, considering the relevance of the content. It also is necessary to reconsider the inner link between the paragraph and the flow of the entire letter (Silva 2005:14-20).

The point where the paragraphs are seen as disconnected can be attributed to an inability to find the proper connection between them. All the characteristics that appear in the flow of thought can be understood without assuming editing or casting. The change of style can also be fully understood in the frame of the overall context and the problems described in Philippians 3 likewise remain in need of being solved within this framework.

Schnelle, in his book *History and Theology*, presents the possibility of a single-letter theory not disrupting the flow of the narrative in Philippians 3 and 4:10-20 (1998:135-137). It is true that the text after 3:2 is unstable in tone and content. But Paul has already mentioned that he preached the gospel with an innocent motive (1:15) and not to be threatened by the enemy is mentioned in 1:28. Here the destruction of the opponent and the salvation of the church are also contrasted violently. In addition, the opponents who pursue their own interests rather than Christ Jesus are already mentioned in 2:21. Paul's reference to dogs in 3:2 is mentioned in 1:27 and 2:1-5 in the exhortation that the churches were called to unite. Furthermore, motivation for joy in 3:1 is presented as a strategy to withstand the situation of conflict. This is read as a synthesis of the motif of joy in 2:18 and 1:18-26, and serves as proof that Philippians 3 is not necessarily independent of Philippians 1 and 2.

Hawthorne, like Schnelle, claims that the enemy is Jewish and that Philippians 3 was not inserted into the letter at a later stage. Hawthorne mentions that it is surprising that the opponents mentioned in 1:15-17 by Paul are the same as the opponents mentioned in

Philippians 3. With 3:1b-21 making it clear that they were Jews or Jewish-Christian teachers, it means that his opponents were hostile to Paul's gospel and tried to dissuade the Philippians from faith in Jesus Christ (2015:43). As 1:29-30 clearly states, 1:28 refers to political opponents who threatened legal action and imprisonment. From Paul's tone it can therefore be argued that the differences in Philippians 1 and 3 should be explained as a change of subject, not a change in the environment (Holloway 2017:13).

Hansen provides a convincing explanation for the abrupt shift in tone in Philippians 3:1. He suggests that Paul's warning in this chapter should be interpreted as part of a larger, more familiar pattern in the letter. He juxtaposes negative and positive examples in this pattern (Hansen 2009:216). Witherington points out that there are many changes in the discourse of Paul's epistles. At the end of Romans 8, Paul, for example, seems to arrive at a conclusion, but Romans 9-11 rapidly transitions to new agendas and theses with little or no contact with previous ones. He also argues that the same thing may have happened in Philippians. Paul, directing the discourse, is able to move quickly from one argument to another and all other arguments in the discourse, as well as all the major parts, contain certain common terms, topics, phrases and ideas that suggest a unified composition (Witherington 2011:17).

In addition, scholars have discussed the meaning of the phrase τὸ λοιπὸν ("finally") in Philippians 3:1, which suggests that Paul is close to the end of the letter (4:8). Bruce (2011) suggests that Paul intended to conclude at this point, but something must have "suddenly occurred to him, which prompted the warning of verse 2 with its sequel". Bruce (2011:101) refers to 3:1 and 4:8-9 as the first and the second conclusion of the letter.

Not every interpreter necessarily identifies a sharp break between Philippians 2:30 and 3:2 in the letter. Koenig (1985:120) noted that Τὸ λοιπὸν could be translated as "further" or "as for the rest." In this case, Philippians 3:1b would mark the beginning of a new section. Fee (2005:288-290) also claimed that translating Τὸ λοιπὸν as "finally" is a purely unnecessary translation. The phrase is used as the intention of changing the conversation (Fee 2005:288-290). Runge (2011:Phil 3:1-4a) finally summarises this view briefly: "Τὸ λοιπὸν signals that he is moving on to another problem. It does not mean this is the last thing he has to say".

We should also note the word χαίρετε (“rejoice”). It may be wrongly translated as “goodbye” or “farewell”. It is unclear from what background the exhortation to rejoice in the Lord is derived, but there are four themes of joy in Philippians: first, when the Philippian church mentions what it has helped financially (1:4; 4:10); second, when the church is happy to unite (2:2, 2:4); third, when overcoming tribulation or the enemy wisely (1:18; 4:4); and fourth, when the church is living a perfect life (2:17-18). Considering that the expression about rejoicing in the Lord is repeated in 4:4, the possibility of the third is suitable. This expression seems to be a recommendation to rejoice in the Lord even in the case of expected tribulation because of opposition. Furthermore, χαίρετε is not the end of the letter and a sudden change of tone can be expected in an informal, friendly and personal letter like Philippians (Garland 1985; Haupt 1987; Vincent 1897).

2.5.2 Internal evidence that Philippians 4:10-20 is a letter fragment

Multiple-letter theory

As in the beginning of Philippians 3, a change in mood and circumstances occurs, starting from Philippians 4:10. I would like to present two arguments that are at the heart of the controversy in Philippians 4. First, that 4:10-20 comprises an independent letter, expressing gratitude, not only as a coherent theme on its own, but also for the reception of Epaphroditus. It is the first letter that was written, assuming that Philippians is composed of three letter fragments. This section presents the first expression of thanks: Paul is expressing his gratitude for the gift of the Philippians on the part of Epaphroditus. This letter was written not long before Paul was imprisoned, at the time when the Philippians had heard the news and sent a gift to Epaphroditus. Paul immediately received a gift and sent a thank-you note to express immediate gratitude to the Philippians for their faithfulness.

Second, the thank-you note of 4:10-20 comes unacceptably late in the letter. Paul does offer a formal expression of gratitude for the gifts through 4:10-20, but this occurs too late in the letter. According to 2:25-30, Epaphroditus had enough time to let the Philippians know that he was ill, and for Epaphroditus to deliver a gift for them to hear about his health concerns. Paul did not communicate his gratitude to the church in Philippi for their gift during all this

time when messages were being sent back and forth between Paul's location and Philippi to communicate information about the health of Epaphroditus. As a result, it would seem that 4:10-20 was written as a separate letter to the Philippians immediately after Paul received their gift from Epaphroditus (Hansen 2009:16). This controversy has been suggested as one of the main reasons for questioning the authenticity of the letters.

Single-letter theory

For the indirect reasons presented above only, it is difficult to explain why this text exists, but it is possible to think about more active reasons for the text when considering the composition of the whole of Philippians. Chapter 4 verses 10-20 fit into the letter naturally. Paul intentionally and repeatedly refers to the relationship between himself and the Philippian church at the beginning and the end of the epistle (1:3-11, 4:10-20). In this regard, the inclusion of 4:10-20 can be seen as very intentional. Witherington (2011) describes Philippians 4:10-20 as a postscript to the letter. In this letter, Paul finally arrived at a deliberate deliberation (support for enactment) on this point (Witherington 2011:264). Reed (1997:473) sees Philippians 4:10-20 as a combination of two authoritative conventions (expressions of appreciation and appreciation of gifts). Finally, although Fowl seems to detect a mystery at the end of the letter, Paul's discussion of Philippi's constitutive gifts is meaningful in the context of the gift-giving convention and friendship standards in the Greco-Roman world (2005:189-192).

The internal evidence of 4:10-20 is as follows. First, Paul's main purpose is not to appreciate gifts but to deal with conflicts (Gnilka 1968; Garland 1985). Paul expresses apprehension about receiving financial support (Martin 1987:63-64). Considering the rest of the letter and its main theme, it clearly explains the exact reason why expressing gratitude was deployed later. Paul's most important agenda was to refocus the overall worldview of the Philippians. He prioritised this theme and developed it before thanking in order to discuss the gift in its proper context. As thanking was not Paul's main purpose, he left expressing his extended thanks to the end (Garland 1985:153). In other words, Paul emphasised his appreciation and the importance of Philippi's gift in the sense of a climax and these last words would ring in the ear when the letter was read aloud among the Philippians (Fee 1995:423). Martin

(1987:180) also explains that Paul had several purposes in mind when passing on information about his situation, explaining the situation of Epaphroditus and exhorting the community.

Schnelle (1998) comments that, if 4:10-20 is an independent letter, it should have been preceded by more specific words rather than being attached to the end of the letter as we have it. Moreover, there is no mention of Epaphroditus' illness in this letter of thanksgiving. It would be much more convincing to explain that, according to them, it was not mentioned here because it had been mentioned earlier (Schnelle 1998:35-36).

In the second instance, the suggestion of helping in 1:3-11 and 2:25-30 is not necessarily unofficial, but it may be an introductory reference of the gift mentioned in Philippians 4:10-20 (Reed 1997:139). Gerald Peterman (1997:90-98) emphasises the many similarities between the two parts and suggests that the so-called late appreciation of their gift can be explained by the Greek and Roman cultural convention on gift-giving. Thus, based on the intimate language between Paul and his Philippian friends, it shows how Paul could express thanks without using thanksgiving. Cousar (2009:8) also believes that placing the expression of thanks at the end of the letter (4:10-20) signifies *inclusion* with giving thanks at the beginning (1:3-11), so there is no need to separate it as a different letter.

Paul appreciated the offering but at the same time felt uncomfortable about breaking his principle of self-sufficiency (1 Thess 2:9, 2 Thess 3:8-9). I would therefore like to understand that he deferred expressing gratitude (1:4-7) to the end. Paul clearly states what he wants to say in 4:10-20. There is only a partial intention to confirm that he received the offer. Above all, Paul wanted to clarify his position with regard to the offering and hoped that he would not be misunderstood by the Philippian church. For Paul, however, the offering by the church is merely a practical example of the problem of offering a little lesson, since Paul repeatedly states the relationship between him and the Philippian church (4:10-20), as he does in the introduction of the letter (1:3-11). If Paul was speaking of the love of the Philippian church identified in the beginning as a donation, he now explains his true intention and desire for the offering. In short, for these reasons, it is appropriate to look at the letter to the Philippians as a single letter in 4:10-20.

2.6 Additional evidence for the integrity of Philippians

The debate about the integrity of Philippians focuses on various discussions regarding divisions. However, many positive arguments have been raised about the unity of Philippians. The analysis of lexical and thematic material in Philippians confirms that Philippians is a single letter, although debates about the integrity of the letter, which rely on Paul's conjectures about the situation in Philippians, are interesting. Meanwhile the repetition of key words and the emergence of specific motives provide the main evidence for the completeness of Philippians.

The letter shares the same vocabulary throughout the four chapters. A few brief samples bear out this claim: χαίρω (rejoice, 1:18; 2:2, 17 and 18; 3:1; 4:1 and 10), κοινωνία (participation, 2:1; 3:10; 4:14 and 15), φρονέω (mind, 2:2, 5; 3:15 and 19; 4:10), ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ (in Christ Jesus, 2:5; 3:13 and 14), σῶμα (body, 2:11; 3:19 and 20), Ἰησοῦς Χριστός (Jesus Christ, 2:11; 3:8 and 20), ἐπιπόθητος (long, 1:8; 2:26; 4:1) (Bloomquist 1992:102-103). Thematic parallels include: ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι (call to unity, 1:27-28; 2:2; 3:16), ἀντίκειμαι (adversaries, 1:28; 2:1-4; 3:2), τρέχω (race motif, 1:25; 2:12-14; 3:12-16), ταπεινοφροσύνη (humility, 2:2, 5-8; 3:4-8), πάσχω (suffering, 1:29-30; 2:8; 3:10), συμμιμητής (exhortation to imitate, 1:30; 2:11; 3:17). Silva (2005) provides an example that supports the literary integrity of the letters, with the remarkable verbal parallelism between Philippians 3 and the previous section. It is particularly important that the consistency in similar phrases is maintained at the beginning and the end of the text (Silva 2005:13).

In the 1990s, Peter Wick's work was particularly prominent through his rhetorical criticism of the investigation. His paper notes the striking parallelism and similarity between the five paired passages in Philippians: A = 1:12-26 and 3:1-16; B = 1:27-30 and 3:17-21; C = 2:1-11 and 4:1-3; D = 2:12-18 and 4:4-9; E = 2:19-30 and 4:10-20. Wick (1994:11) further finds extensive structural links among these five double sections, with the Christ hymn at the centre of the schema, and attempts to show how this structure relates to the contents of the letter. The author argues that Philippians is a work of high literary quality that was possible both because Paul had a relaxed and friendly relationship with the Philippian Christians and

because he had the rest and time necessary to concentrate during his imprisonment in his home in Rome.

There are two main things that we have noticed in recent years: the argument that emerged from the structure required by epistolary and rhetorical convention (Alexander 1989; Bloomquist 1992; Garland 1985; Luter & Lee 1995; Reed 1996; Rolland 1990; Schoon-Janssen 1991; Watson 1988; Wick 1994; Witherington 1994) and modern discourse analysis and ‘text-linguistic’ theory (Black 1995; Guthrie 1995; Koperski 1992; Reed 1997). As mentioned above, I argue in favour of the single-letter theory of Philippians for which some other scholars have also opted, focusing on epistolary analysis and rhetorical analysis.

2.6.1 Epistolary analysis

In recent years, scholars have studied rhetorical patterns and forms of Greco-Roman letters and have used this method to analyze Paul’s writing. The distinction between types of letters is not hard and fast – each type has a specific structural form and pattern of rhetoric (Thurston & Harrington 2009:34). Philippians has been analyzed as a letter of friendship, as a letter of consolation and as a family letter. This analysis has proven to be highly determined by our understanding of the letter and its circumstances (Thurston & Ryan 2009:34). Most interpreters view Philippians as a letter of friendship (e.g., Stowers 1991; Fee 1995; Fitzgerald 1996; Fowl 2005).

Fee (1995), Reumann (2008) and Witherington III (2011) proposed that the letter to the Philippians follows customs of friendship. They pointed out that friendship was a matter of serious philosophical inquiry in the Greco-Roman world. Aristotle, Cicero, Plutarch, and Seneca all wrote extensively on this topic. It was generally understood that friendship could be between equals or between people of different social standings.

The latter often included patronage. Friendship between equals can be based on virtue, pleasure or need. The highest form was based on virtue and included mutual

encouragement toward virtue and reciprocity in giving and receiving gifts both material and spiritual.

(Thurston & Ryan 2009:34)

According to Fee (1955), those who claim the multiple-letter theory make use of objective criteria, but the reason why the letter is seen as divided is subjective. The ultimate reason for dismissing the multiple-letter hypothesis is that different parts of the present letter fit together like a single piece and show that the present arrangement works perfectly when viewed as the letter of friendship. Finally, the text we have is basically from the apostles, and “early scribes apparently had less reason to alter it than in many other parts of the New Testament” (Fee 1955:21-24).

Other suggestions were also made regarding the type of letter that Philippians is. Holloway (2017:11) suggested that “Philippians is a letter of consolation written to encourage the Philippians in their discouragement over Paul’s imprisonment”. It is intended to turn them from their worries about Paul and their own suffering for the gospel. His strategy is to help them identify what is important and what is not. In 1:12-2:30 Paul mentions his own imprisonment and its impact, and in 3:1-4:1 he emphasises that one thing is necessary to know and rejoice in the Lord. Thus Paul’s suffering and the sufferings of the Philippians serve to advance the Gospel and unite them with Jesus who suffered for all of them.

Alexander (1989:87-95) studied the formal pattern in family letters and concluded that Philippians is of this type. She has isolated seven features of such letters, all of which are evident in Philippians:

- (1) an address and greeting, 1:1-2; (2) a prayer for those receiving the letter, 1:3-11;
- (3) the author’s reassurance to the recipients about him/herself, 1:12-26; (4) the sender’s request for reassurance about the recipients (as in mutual friendship, see above), 1:27-2:18; 3:1-4:3; (5) exchange of information about mutual acquaintances, 2:19-30; (6) exchange of greetings with third parties, 4:21-22; (7) closing wish for health, 4:23.

(Thurston & Ryan 2005:35)

She concludes that the true purpose of Philippians is to strengthen family ties. In the end, it is a letter that binds Paul and the Philippian Christians more closely to their work for the gospel.

Among the criticisms of the multiple-letter theory in terms of genre is the study by J. T. Fitzgerald (1992). According to him, the genre of an ancient letter of friendship has a very competitive and belligerent character that is related to the public situation of business and politics. So even in friendship letters, there are opportunities to discuss enmity. If Philippians is regarded as a friendship letter, then it is not necessary to consider Philippians 3 out of place, as happens in the multiple-letter theory where Philippians 3 is seen as presenting a boundary for an enemy that poses a threat to a friend. Philippians 4 also often refers to the giving and receiving of financial assistance when participating in cooperative projects in friendship. Therefore, it is natural to be placed later for the purpose of strengthening the friendship relations mentioned in Philippians 1 and 2, through financial support. So thanks can be placed at the end rather than at the beginning of a letter as well (Fitzgerald 1992:321-322). In this sense, Philippians 4:10-20 does not make Philippians multiple letters, but it may retain its present position by the rhetorical arrangement of the whole structure that may exist in the flow of the whole letter (Stowers 1991:107-117).

In the end, all the scholars who analyzed Philippians in accordance with the structure of the Greco-Roman letter format presented above concluded that all of Philippians constituted a single letter.

2.6.2 Rhetorical analysis

Scholars who have approached Philippians from the perspective of Greco-Roman rhetoric also draw the same conclusion as scholars who analyzed it in terms of its epistolary format. They argue that deliberative rhetoric is used in Philippians for the purpose of exhortation (Black 1997; Watson 1988; Witherington 1994). Deliberative rhetoric induces the audience to take certain actions centred on showing their advantages or strengths. One type of argument particularly suited to this kind of persuasion is the argument from examples (Witherington 1994:96-97). By interpreting Philippians as deliberative speech, we can see how the letter is

structured in accordance with the goal of opposing actions and admonition. Paul's mission is to encourage the friends in Philippi to be more united and to convince them that the unity of the saints is essential to the progress of the gospel.

Although there are different parts in the rhetorical structure, each of the scholars explains how Paul's message is eclectically arranged. Ultimately, as Howell (1994) claims, Philippians has a clear structure and theme. The theme is to live a life worthy of the Gospel against the opponents of unity (Howell 1994:56). Black (1997:20) proposes that Philippians follows the structure of the Greco-Roman letter. Black points out a chiasmus in the structure of the first part of the body, relating to 1:12-26; 1:27-2:18; 2:19-30. The second part of the body treats unity and warns about the people who use Paul's life as an example of the way to live.

Watson's (1988:57) rhetorical analysis also claims that the letter to the Philippians is carefully organised according to the principles of Greco-Roman rhetoric. Watson also classifies Philippians as a deliberate speech. The rhetorical situation is the appearance of a rival gospel that Paul must refute. Because he writes to encourage the Philippians to live lives worthy of the Gospel, Philippians 3, in particular, contrasts Paul's and the Philippians' lives with the life of the opponent and shows that life worthy of the Gospel is evidence of the destruction of the enemy. Watson concludes that "Philippians is not artless, but follows a rhetorical model that incorporates a variety of repeated patterns of words and ideas" (1997:421). Witherington (2011) likewise sees Paul's primary focus in Philippians as securing concord in the Church. He concludes that Paul uses positive and negative examples to exhort the Philippians to unity and concludes that the letter reflects "considerable skill in rhetorical composition. This letter is far from artless prose lacking careful arrangement of form and content" (2011:21-30).

Ralph Brucker (1997:286-290) discusses the rhetorical character of Philippians as a whole. The author analyzes various ancient records that provide examples of fictional literature. A noteworthy part of his work provides detailed evidence of a combination of keywords that is incompatible with the multiple-letter theory of Philippians (Brucker 1997:286-290). These

attempts play a crucial role in providing evidence and a firm basis for the acceptance of Philippians as a single letter.

The final notable scholars that will be mentioned here and who examined the structure of Philippians, are Luther and Lee (1995). They suggest that the whole of Philippians is a chiasmus. Luther and Lee (1995:89) suggest that “this observation enables them to solve the problem of unity, the overall structure, and the unifying theme of Philippians”. In the letter, A (1:3-11) and A’ (4:10-20) deal with the theme of partnership in the gospel, and B (1:12-26) and B’ (4:6-9) list the results of the collaboration between Paul and the Philippians. C (1:27-2:4) and C’ (4:1-5) call for unity among the Philippians, and D (2:5-16) and D’ (3:1b-21) follow the example of humility. At the centre of the letter are two examples of partnership in the Gospel. They are Timothy and Epaphroditus and are two people who set an example for the Philippians for how to live (Luther & Lee 1995:101).

As we have seen, rhetorical analysis is helpful to argue for the notion that Philippians is one single letter. A summary of the claims for the single-letter theory can briefly be provided. While 3:1 and 3:2 appear to reveal a sudden break, the translation of βλέπετε (“look”) only indicates that there is a general change in the tone. In addition, 4:1-9 and 20-23 may not be the end of another letter fragment, and expressions of appreciation may be added later as a basis for controversy. In other words, assuming that Epaphroditus was ill during the trip but recovered after he arrived, there is no need to reconsider the historical context of 4:10-20 (Standhartinger 2008:21).

I would argue that Philippians 3 has an internal connection with the beginning and end texts, so Philippians can be seen as a single letter revealing consistency and integrity in structure and composition. The detailed discussion in the next chapter centres on the validity of the single-letter theory through a thematic approach that explains this inner connection.

2.7 Conclusion

We have briefly looked at the history and internal and external evidence of the unity of Philippians. To begin with the conclusion: Philippians does not need to be approached with a multiple-letter theory – it can arguably be read as a single, consistent letter in its present form. Scholars who promote the multiple-letter theory have not answered the following questions: “Why in this order? Why not place the supposedly earliest letter (4:10-20) first? Why place elements of the second letter (4:4-9) towards the end after interrupting the flow with yet another supposed letter (3:1-4:3)?” (Bockmuehl 1997:25). The multiple-letter theory thus unnecessarily complicates interpretation.

The controversy has focused on the tone and mood at the beginning of Philippians 3 and the postponement of giving thanks to 4:10-20. As for the first issue, most scholars at the opposite end of the discussion agree that there is a shift in tone and atmosphere in Philippians 3. Scholars advocating the single-letter theory have argued that the change has been exaggerated. The change happens in the flow of consciousness, rather than in following a predefined set of rules. Others emphasised the similarity of vocabulary and subjects throughout the letter. Regarding the second issue, it depends on how modern readers reconstruct the historical situation. As we have seen, the opposing sides of the debate will never agree, but the agreement on the literary question is positive. Therefore, recognising the problems in Philippians 3, it becomes necessary to explore the logical basis for the single-letter theory through a thematic approach.

Chapter 3

A Rhetorical analysis of Philippians 3:1-21

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to analyze Philippians 3 from Tolmie's (2005) point of view on rhetorical analysis. Tolmie's methodology proves that the rhetorical structure can be reconstructed fairly accurately from the text itself without forcing an external model onto the letter. Tolmie's method also provides a better understanding of the persuasive strategies in the letter. His rhetorical methodology is important in establishing rhetorical situations; identifying rhetorical strategies; explaining Paul's basic rhetorical goals; and how to achieve those goals. Therefore, before commenting on the text, I will attempt to construct the rhetorical situation based on Tolmie's methodology and explore ways of achieving such rhetorical goals.

3.2 Rhetorical situation of the letter

Each of Paul's letters should be studied in the light of its rhetorical situation. This simply means that Paul's letters were written in response to specific situations, and each letter is relevant to a specific context. It is not, however, easy to determine the rhetorical situation of Philippians. The rhetorical situation of Philippians is clearly closely linked to the discussion of unity. Scholars who claim the multiple-letter theory for explaining the structure and content of Philippians are building different situations for each element, and have multiple mixed purposes rather than one purpose (Hawthorne 2004:43), whereas those scholars claiming the unity or integrity of the letter work with a single originating situation. These assumptions differ and are complex, but my rhetorical analysis agrees with Watson's (1988:58) claim that it constitutes a situation and assumes the unity of Philippians. Before constructing a rhetorical situation, it is necessary to identify whether the main purpose of the

letter is to maintain the relationship between author and audience, or to encourage and persuade the recipients.

Commentators such as Hendriksen (1962:9-20), Mller (1976:13-14), Matter (1976:11) and Witherington (2011:27) are convinced that Philippians is the answer to the gift Paul received from Philippians through Epaphroditus. This gift was a signal of a deep personal relationship between Paul and the church in Philippi. The main motivation of the letter is to maintain friendship, as Marshall (1987:35-69), White (1990:210-215), Stowers (1991:105-121) and Fitzgerald (1996:141-160) maintain. Alexander (1995:90) insists that the key to the letter is to exchange news to maintain the relationship. It is clear that the letter reveals a close personal bond of friendship. In addition, many features of Greco-Roman friendship letters that are found in the letter also support this view (Fee 1995:2-15). Holloway (2017) interpreted the Philippians letter as a response to their and to Paul's plight, as he tried to console them in their grief. Paul's main purpose, then, is to comfort the Philippians who are concerned about his imprisonment and possible execution, suggesting that the issue of discord is included in this broad issue (Holloway 2017:34).

Silva (2005), however, presents a different solution when he reconstructs the situation of the Philippians. He claims that "the Philippians were facing great adversity, had lost their sense of Christian joy and were tempted to abandon their struggle" (2005:21-22). The believers in Philippi were experiencing a lack of unity and many people had lost confidence in their ability to maintain a Christian confession. As a result, Paul is concerned about them by encouraging them to stand fast and be contend (1:27-28), to run the race without looking back (3:13-15), and asks them to take responsibility for working out their salvation (2:12). Paul tried to persuade them not to give up in the situation they were facing. This understanding of the rhetorical situation has a profound effect on the structural analysis of Philippians 3.

O'Brien (1991:36-38) and Fee (1995:32) agree with Silva's view in focusing on the situation in Philippi. For example, Fee (1995:29) finds letters in both the friendship and hortatory sections that are specific to the situation of the Philippians. The reason for the exhortation is that it is the response to the suffering caused by their opponents, in particular, due to the

problems brought about regarding their internal insecurity. Fee (1995:32) remarks: “The Philippians are in a life-and-death struggle for the gospel in Philippi, and if their present unrest goes uncorrected, it could bid fair to blunt, if not destroy, their witness to Christ in their city”. There may be some questions about these issues that sit behind important moments in the letter. I agree with the suggestions offered by Silva (2005), Fee (1995) and O’Brien (1991). From this, the letter is seen as the answer to the problem faced by the Philippians. It is appropriate to look at the threat posed by the enemy and the matter of the Philippians’ inner insecurity. Paul furthermore uses the important theme of imitation to deal with the problems they face.

On this basis, two rhetorical situations are clearly indicated in Philippians 3. The letter clearly reveals the rhetorical goal that Paul intends to accomplish. First, it compares the two kinds of righteousness to weaken the opposing views (3:1-11). Second, it encourages readers to live according to the gospel (3:12-21). In conclusion, Paul uses various arguments to achieve his rhetorical goals. I will cover the details in the discussion of the analysis.

3.3 Issues needing attention prior to the analysis

The aim of this part is not to discuss theological issues, but to try and provide a rhetorical analysis of Philippians 3. In particular, I focus on the way Paul argues and the types of issues he uses. I would like to examine some of the problems mentioned earlier by scholars’ study the rhetoric of Philippians. Based on this discussion, I will determine the boundaries of Philippians 3.

3.3.1 Previous rhetorical studies and the location of Philippians 3 in the letter

Philippians 3 is structurally not an independent letter. This has been confirmed by scholars who have studied Philippians by using rhetorical methodology (Watson 1988; Bloomquist 1993; Witherington 2011; Black 1995). They tried to prove the literary integrity of Philippians through rhetoric. The structure of Philippians as seen by them is presented in the

following table:

	Watson	Bloomquist	Witherington III	Black
Exordium	1:3-26	1:3-11	1:3-11	1:3-11
Narratio	1:27-30	1:12-14	1:12-26	1:12-26 4:10-20
Propositio			1:27-30	
Partitio		1:13-18a		
Probatio	2:1-3:21 ⁵	1:18b-4:7 ⁶	2:1-4:3	1:27-3:21
Peroratio	4:1-20 ⁷	4:8-20	4:4-20	4:1-9

Watson (1988:57-88) argues that Paul uses rhetorical conventions in his other letters and that the letter to the Philippians exemplifies a rhetorical structure that affirms the letter's literary integrity. Watson (1997:416) finds his evidence in 2:1-3:21, in the exhortation to the Philippians to live a life worthy of the gospel Paul taught them. Witherington (2011:14) understands Paul's primary focus in Philippians as securing concord in the Church. Paul uses deliberative rhetoric for that purpose. The largest part of the letter's body is seen to run from verses 2:1-4:3. It is the letter's *probatio*, which is followed by the *peroratio* from 4:4-20. Witherington (2011:25) concludes that Paul uses a positive and a negative example to persuade the Philippians to uphold unity.

In looking at the table, it is clear that there is some discrepancy among the listed scholars in their analysis of the rhetoric of Philippians. However, the existence of discrepancies does not invalidate the theory itself. According to Snyman (2006:330), verses 2:1-3:21 contain part of

⁵ The *probatio* is divided into three subsections with an inserted *digressio* (2:19-30): 2:1-11; 2:12-18; 3:1-21.

⁶ The *probatio* is divided into five parts: *confirmatio* (1:18b-26; *exhortatio* (1:27-2:18); *exempla* (2:19-30); *reprehensio* (3:1-16); and *exhortatio* (3:17-4:7).

⁷ This section includes the *repetitio* (4:1-9) and *adfectus* (4:10-20).

the evidence serving an important function that provides elaboration on the propositions listed in the *narratio*. The argument of Philippians 3 itself is an integral part of the whole letter. In addition, content-wise, Philippians 3 is not to be separated from the rest of the letter, but has an important role and function in harmony with the whole of Philippians.

I would like to summarise the position of Philippians 3 in the following way: Paul summarised the point of the counsel which he wanted to give to the Philippian church in 1:27-30. They should live in a way worthy of the gospel (1:27), that the Church should unite as one (1:27) and not be afraid of its enemies. Paul explains this point from 2:1-4:9. First, Philippians chapter 2 deals with the theme of the church's union, and Philippians 3 then provides practical exhortation to support the situation which is faced by the church. Paul summarises it as living worthy of the gospel. This brief appeal is a central point in all of Philippians. Tom Wright (2005:589) described Philippians 1:27-30 as the "main appeal" of the letter. According to Flemming (2009:36), it is the main thesis that is developed in the letter.

Philippians is literally unified when we take Paul's exhortation in 1:27-30 as point of departure, in which thesis is clearly identified. Therefore, I will now attempt to do a rhetorical analysis according to Tolmie's methodology with this point of departure in mind. I focus on Paul's types of argument, especially the types of rhetoric he claims and the types of issues he uses. Tolmie (2005:235) compared the rhetorical strategy of the various phases to determine differences and overlaps among them. He grouped the steps with the same objective together on the basis of these comparisons.

3.3.2 The sections of Philippians 3

Scholars who acknowledge the integrity of Philippians are not equally in agreement concerning the sections of Philippians 3. The demarcations in Philippians 3 as explained by the following debaters are largely divided into three categories.

3.3.2.1 Scholars who relates to Philippians 3's place in the structure of the letter as a whole

Various scholars have proposed structural divisions for Philippians, of which chapter 3 forms an integral part. The following scholars form a representative position in this regard and suggest the following sub-divisions for the chapter.

- O'Brien (1991): 3:1-21, subdivided as 3:1-3; 4-6; 7- 11; 12- 16; 17- 21
- Hawthorne (2004): 3:1-21, subdivided as 3:1-3; 4-11; 12-16; 17; 18-19; 20-21
- Hansen (2009): 3:1-21, subdivided as 3:1-6; 7-11; 12-16; 17-21
- Johnson (2013): 3:1-21, subdivided as 3:1-11; 12-16; 17-21
- Keown (2016): 3:1-21, subdivided as 3:1-11; 12-16; 17-21

Hawthorne (2004) looks at 4:1 as a transitional verse. The apostle now shifts from theological or polemical matters to concluding remarks: exhortations, expressions of gratitude, and words of farewell. "Ὡστε ("therefore") is a conjunction that requires readers to look back and consider it in light of what had just been said (Hawthorne 2004:239). I will treat Phil 4:1 as a new section, noting that the verse is transitional and looks backward and forward simultaneously (Hansen 2009:278; Loh & Nida 1977:123; Marshall 1993:105-6; Melick 1991:145; O'Brien 1995:473).

3.3.2.2 Scholars who propose that Philippians 4:1 should be included as part of Philippians 3

Some scholars have argued that Phil 4:1 is best understood as the concluding line of the argument found in Phil 3.

- Silva (2005): 3:1-4:1, subdivided as 3:1-6; 7-11; 3:12-4:1.

- Flemming (2009): 3:1-4:1, subdivided as 3:1-11; 12-14; 3:15-4:1
- Hellerman (2015): 3:1-4:1, subdivided as 3:1-11; 12-16; 3:17-4:1.
- Holloway (2017): 3:1-4:1, subdivided as 3:1-3; 4-11; 12-16; 3:17-4:1.

For most interpreters, 4:1 formulates an argument that brings the discussion of 3:17-20 to an end (Vincent 2000:129; Thielman 1995:200; Witherington 2011:220; Bockmuehl 1997:237; Thurston 2009:135). According to Silva (2005:15), 3:1 begins a wholly new section ending in 4:1. He sees the beginning of the exhortation concluding at 4:2 (Silva 2005:15). Flemming (2009) insists that 4:1 is closely connected to the preceding section, despite the chapter break in Philippians. Ὡστε (therefore) indicates that Paul is trying to apply what he had just said to the particular situation of the Philippians (Flemming 2009:203). Holloway (2017:178) proposes that Paul added a conclusive exhortation of the Philippians in 4:1. According to these assertions, 4:1 provides the conclusion to what Paul presented in Philippians 3. Therefore, it is argued that 4:1 should be viewed as the conclusion to Philippians 3.

3.3.2.3 Scholars who identify Philippians 4:1-3 as part of Philippians 3

Some scholars have argued that Philippians 4:1-3 is best understood as the final appeals of the argument found in Philippians 3.

- Fee (1995): 3:1-4:3, subdivided as 3:1-4a; 4b-14; 3:15-4:3.
- Garland (2006): 3:1-4:3, subdivided as 3:1-3; 4-6; 7-11; 12-16; 17-21; 4:1-3.
- Cousar (2009): 3:1-4:3, subdivided as 3:1-4a; 4b-16; 17-19; 20-21; 4:1-3.

According to Fee (1995:39), 4:1-3 should be included as part of Philippians 3 because the command to rejoice in the Lord in 3:1 begins again in 4:4. Cousar (2009:121) also argues that 4:4 again picks up on the theme of rejoicing, but he makes the case that 3:2-4:3 is a fragment of another letter. In the end, according to their claims, they are included in the exhortations in Philippians 3 up to 4:3, with 4:4 being the beginning of a new exhortation.

To summarise, Philippians is a single letter and not multiple letters that Paul wrote to the church at Philippi (see Chapter 2, single-letter theory). One can easily view 4:1 as a transitional verse. Verse 1 makes a declaration calling attention and 4:2-9 gives the detailed recommendations. Therefore, I argue that verse 1 plays the role of introducing 1-9 entirely.

3.3.3 The structure of Philippians 3

Philippians 3 has been divided in various ways as is evident in the summaries of the various commentators' positions presented above. The next issue addressed consists of two parts. First, how should the demarcations in Philippians 3 be applied? Second, should Philippians 4:1-4:3 be included as part of Philippians 3? I think Tolmie's (2005) methodology provides the best way for overcoming this problem. Based on Tolmie's methodology, an analysis of Philippians 3 clearly distinguishes Paul's rhetoric strategy in two parts. There is a warning to Judaizers in 3:1-11 and exhortation to follow Paul's example in 3:12-21. Philippians 3 can therefore be divided into two separate sections: 3:1-11 and 3:12-3:21.

The emotional tone of 4:1 tells of Paul's love for the Philippians expressed in 4:2-3. Thus, 4:1 returns to a wider argument than just what is recorded in 3:12-21. The sudden emotional tone of 4:1 and the *asyndeton* of 4:2 all justify a break between 3:21 and 4:1 (Snyman 2006:331). I therefore analyze the structure of Philippians by focusing on Philippians 3 by itself, because I believe that Philippians 4:1-3 is not part of Philippians 3, but the beginning of a new theme. The structure of Philippians 3 that I suggest is as follows:

- 3:1-11
 - 3:1 to 3: A warning against the opponents
 - 3:4 to 11: Paul's autobiographical confession and the contrast of two kinds of righteousness
- 3:12-21
 - 3:12 to 14: Pressing on toward the goal
 - 3:15 to 16: Exhorting the Philippians to aspire to perfection

- 3:17 to 21: Imitating Paul, a heavenly commonwealth and a glorious hope.

3.4 Analysis of Philippians 3

Philippians 3 is divided into two parts according to the rhetorical situation. It gives a warning to the Jews and encourages the recipients to follow Paul's example. In this section I will proceed to analyze the contents of the text. Simultaneously, I will examine the concrete contents of Paul's argument as well as the rhetorical strategies that he uses. In addition to this, I will also look at the rhetorical function and rhetorical effect of Christ's example, and Paul's rhetorical strategy of imitation.

3.4.1 Analysis of Philippians 3:1-11

Two sections can be identified in Philippians 3:1-11. First, Paul repeats his warning against opponents (3:1-3). Second, Paul contrasts two kinds of righteousness and uses an argument based on his experience (3:4-11). Parts of 4-11 could be regarded as the motivation for Philippians 3:1-3. The second part presents his argument concerning what he had experienced. Paul's comments here serve the broader purpose of reassuring the Philippians as to the meaning of true righteousness and to pursue the establishment of a Christian lifestyle in the lives of his audience. Therefore, I would like to identify the type of arguments Paul uses and investigate the rhetorical techniques he used to improve communication. These also reveal the strategies and techniques he applied to reassure the Philippians of the true nature of righteousness.

3.4.1.1 Philippians 3:1-3: A warning against the opponent

I would like to first focus on the controversial section of Philippians 3:1-2. It seems clear that the difference in emotional tone between the two verses indicates some change, but the rhetorical and thematic unity of the letter does not necessarily suggest a break here.

According to Thurston (2009:91), Paul's attitude toward the Philippian Christians remains consistent and his approach to teaching them remains constant.

Paul begins this phase with an exhortation to rejoice. Τὸ λοιπόν ("finally") makes it seem that Paul is saying that he is bringing his argument to an end. In fact, many reversals translate τὸ λοιπόν ("finally") as "to the end". This word is used to describe the atmosphere of the "finally" (Phil 4:8; 2 Thess 3:1; 1 Cor 13:11). The actual construction usually relates to time; "still sleeping" (Mt 26:45; Mk 14:41) and "from now on" (I Cor 7:29; Heb 7:29; 10:13) (Keown 2017:91).

The scholars who insist on the unity of Philippians hold the following views. Fee (2010:291) reasonably suggests a translation (with respect to the problems to be solved) "regarding the rest of the issue". Koperski (1996:78) argues that the strength of Paul's warning to the opponents may be related to Paul's concern to protect the deeply affectionate church. Geoffrion (1993) argues that an abrupt tonal change is a deliberate rhetorical strategy. It is intended to note the contrast between the identity of the opponent and the Paul's own modelling of the gospel that follows (Geoffrion 1993:200). Witherington (2011:186) argues that Paul uses this section to indicate that he is moving on to a further argument or appeal. It would therefore be better to translate this word as "and now" or "furthermore". In the end, Paul begins to deal with different subjects in a different tone of voice. The subject is not independent in Philippians 3, but introduces topics related to Paul's previous record. For example, the section picks up on Paul's earlier admonition in 1:27-30 to live out the gospel by standing firm (1:27; 4:1) in the face of opposition (1:28; 3:2-3) and suffering (1:29-30; 3:10). The relevant section is covered in more detail in Chapter 4.

The perplexing expression is τὰ αὐτὰ ("to say *the same things*") and ὑμῖν δὲ ἀσφαλές ("it is safe for you"). It is also unclear what the use is of the same words referred to in the previous teaching of the letter and especially regarding his travel plans, when he refers to rejoicing, humility, unity, and divisions in the church (Bockmuehl 1997:180; Caird 1976:132; Hansen 2009:213-15; Hawthorne & Martin, 2015:173; O'Brien 1991:347; Scott 1995:72; Spence-Jones 1984:111), "rejoice in the Lord" are unconvincing for three main reasons (Melick 1991:126; Silva 2005:152; Loh & Nida 1977:90; Fee 1995:292-293). These views, however,

do not seem appropriate because it does not fit well with the words (“safe for you”) that follow. I propose that the same statement relates to the exhortation that appears after 3:2. In other words, it is more natural to view it as exhortation about the enemy (Martin 1987:155; O’Brien 1991:352; Witherington 2011:184).

The transition to a new argument begins as the theme of joy is repeated in “rejoice in the Lord”. The verb “joy” also means “goodbye” or “farewell” under certain circumstances (2 Cor 13:11). But it is not used here in another meaning. For the joy of the subject has already been emphasised at many points (2:17-18; 28-29). Alexander (1989:97) says it is more likely to come at the end of such a document, with the meaning of “greetings”. Wick (1994:57-58) emphasises that this verse in the middle of the discourse provides a rhetorical and theological centre and main repeated theme. Providing an example of following Christ’s example is the cognitive thrust of this rhetorical discourse, but pushing it emotionally from beginning to end is the call to rejoice in the Lord. Joy means that the Lord is the foundation and the centre of their joy.

An important rhetorical feature in 3:1-3 is the use of the imperative verbal mood and the strategy of vilification. It first appears in the way Paul warns opponents in 3:2. Paul uses the imperative βλέπετε (“watch out or beware”) three times in succession. Paul’s official purpose here is to give “rhetorical expression to the very deep concern he has about the seriousness of the problem facing his friends” (Hawthorne 2004:124). According to Fee (1995), this meaning is a clear threefold warning and has the meaning of “watch” in the sense of “watch out for”. A rhetorical example of “amplification” is used here (Fee 1995:293). The warning is reinforced by each of the objects of the term beginning with the Greek letter kappa such as *κύνας* (“dogs”), *kakous* (“evil workers”), *katatomēn* (“mutilation”) (Hooker 2000:524). The command to watch out may be interpreted as a warning to beware of something hazardous or as an instruction to observe and pay close attention to something (see BDAG 179). Due to on-going disturbance, Paul issued them a warning to watch out for their opponent. He used this as a negative example to show what he had done in the past (3:4-6). In doing so, he persuades the Philippians not to follow the example of the opponent. To influence his followers, he employs rhetorical strategies to sort out his arguments.

Second, Paul uses vilification as an argumentative strategy. Paul uses a negative example to persuade the Philippians to take a stand. Vilification was a well-known phenomenon in early Christianity (Du Toit 1994:403-405). In the following ways, Paul describes the enemies as κύνας (“dogs”), κακοὺς ἐργάτας (“evil workers”) and κατατομήν (“mutilation”). Being compared with dogs in Jewish opinion was “insulting and disgraceful” (1 Sam 17:43). Dogs were recipients of rotten food (Exod 22:30; Judg 7:5), and the defeated and ungodly dead, like Jezebel, were eaten by stray dogs, a sign of their defeat and of divine disfavour (1 Kgs 14:11; 2 Kgs 9:10; Psa 67:24) (Keown 2017:102). Paul calls on them to apply the favourite title for ‘impure’ Gentiles to the Jews. To Paul, “the Jews who promoted their ethnic identity were the real pariahs that defile the holy community, the Christian church, with their erroneous teachings” (Jewett 1970:174).

They (the dogs, evil workers, mutilation) were doing the works of the law like all other Jews, and regarded themselves as “good workers”. But Paul calls them “evil workers”, not because what they did was morally wrong, but because they behaved maliciously. “Paul attacks these champions of circumcision by using a pun filled with bitter irony” containing harsh criticism (Hawthorne 2004:175). The vilification of the opposing side reaches its peak when Paul writes: βλέπετε τὴν κατατομήν (“beware of the mutilation”). Circumcision was a special sign for the Jews of their belonging to the people of God. Paul strengthens his irony and rhetoric with rhyme and pun or paronomasia (Keown 2017:104). Here, Paul uses the term “dog” rhetorically to refer to those who insist on circumcision (Witherington 2011:191). This leads to Paul placing the Jews in a ludicrous light. Osiek (2000:82) calls it “the vehemence of conventional rhetoric in which opponents are excoriated, to create emotional distance in the audience from such people and their”.

The way that a negative example works in such rhetoric is to provide a warning or a dark background that highlights the positive qualities of the salutary example. The above use makes the alternative less attractive, making Paul’s own example more attractive (Witherington 2011:192). In addition, malicious remarks are intended to convey Paul’s negative feelings about the Jews to the Philippian church, and encouraging them to face up to the other’s faults and to persuade the Philippians to share the same feelings. For this reason,

Paul uses the specialised and controversial term “dog” to describe the character of his fellow Jews that are resisting him and the gospel of Jesus.

3.4.1.2 Philippians 3:4-11: Using an argument from his own experience to reiterate the contrast between two kinds of righteousness

Paul explains the meaning of true righteousness through his autobiographical confession in Phil 3:4-11. Kneener (1993) points out that listing virtues was common in epideictic rhetorical praise and blame and that self-commendation was appropriate for self-defence and exemplification (Phil 3:4). Paul here is employing rhetoric to challenge the Judaizers on their own terms, turning self-commendation into an occasion to undermine them. Paul shifts from the first person plural to the first person singular in verse 4. The transition from “us” to “me” in 3:4 provides another new starting point. As he explains the meaning of conviction in the flesh, he enumerates the benefits of being a Jewish descendant and his achievement in the law. As a true Jew, he has the right to show the Philippians that Jewish teaching is futile. This phenomenon not only matches the personal characteristics of the Philippians, but also highlights the personal character of the religious experience that Paul had experienced (Hawthorne 2004:181).

Verses 4-6 tell us how qualified Paul considered himself to be in the eyes of other Jews. Paul defines confidence in the flesh in terms of his pure Jewish descent, his social status of the upper class, moral life without defect as a Pharisee, and his personal piety based on the law. By presenting this self-portrait, Paul demonstrates that he fulfils all qualifications for greatness and excellence within the Jewish community. But his intention is the opposite. Paul uses epideictic oratory. By doing so, he reveals how inadequate the claims of Jews are. Paul declares himself to be a qualified person (3:4b), and presents many reasons for his judgment (3:5-6). In doing so, he intends to reveal that the Jews’ arguments are powerless. Bloomquist (1993:178) says that Paul’s ultimate goal is not to win a competition for status in the flesh but to ridicule those who value the status of the flesh. The opponents are convinced of the Jews’ prerogatives of circumcision; the Philippians are the “true circumcision” compared to them, the latter referring to those who do not rely on human privilege or achievement. Hansen

(2009:223) says the purpose of the demonstration is to persuade the Philippian believers to reject the propaganda for perfection that includes belonging to the Jewish people and by keeping Jewish customs.

The list in Philippians 3:5-6 is divided into two parts: external goods possessed from childhood (3:5a) and accomplishments achieved later in life (3:5b-6) (Holloway 2017:157). According to O'Brien (1991:369), his own achievements are listed to reach a climax. He begins by referring to being a Hebrew, which a climax among the Hebrews (Fee 1995:307), where the emphasis is on God who has given him this privilege. The second emphasis is that there is no defect with regard to the law. The point of the argument is that righteousness under the law is worthless, because it generates "confidence in the flesh". If it means keeping the Torah, it is your own righteousness and your achievement. As for this kind of righteousness, Paul has excelled and is to be regarded as "blameless". The rhetorical function presented here reveals that it is best to claim that Paul is religious or ethnic Jewish. In the end, Paul reveals that he is better than the Jews.

Witherington (2011:196) continued to posit different kinds of persuasion based on these comparisons, indicating that even this verse fulfils the greater purpose of the before-and-after of Paul's life to the Jews. Garland (2006) sees a clear contrast between the righteousness recorded in Philippians 3:6 and the righteousness of God. He has argued that the righteousness achieved through obedience to the code of conduct of the law is merely a substitute for God's own righteousness (Garland 2006:240). Hansen (2009) argues that Paul's claim to be "faultless" according to the righteousness based on the law is best explained as the result of the polemical purpose of Philippians. In his view, the purpose of Paul's argument is to disprove the notion that obedience to the law provides adequate reason to boast in the flesh (Hansen 2009:229).

Paul claims to be the most appropriate person in view of Jewish assertions about what the law requires of Israel. In terms of identity, it is not only a person who has qualifications comparable to those of the Hellenistic Jews, but also a person who lacks one-sidedness in terms of the faith of Israel through the law and the act of defending it. The rhetorical power

here shows that Jews cannot surpass their credentials or their passion as Jews (Witherington 2011:69). The reason for Paul's acute emphasis on this point is that he is trying to prove that those Jews are wrong (Hawthorne 2004:182). Paul takes the position of the opponent and shows that he can "trust the flesh." His intention is to reveal his new value in "Christ." By applying a rhetorical strategy, he presents an example of himself with previously held values as an encounter with Christ, while his present value appears in "Gaining Christ." According to Keown (2017:85), Phil 3:7-11 contains three successive chiasmi which serve to reinforce the rejection of Paul's own boast. The first it is based on gain and loss. The second is based on righteousness, law and faith. And the third is concerned with resurrection and suffering, and death.

3.4.1.2.1 First Chiasmus (Phil 3:7-9a)

The first theme is based on the gain-loss-Christ-loss-gain format in verses 7-9a.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| A (gain, v. 7a) | [ἀλλὰ] ἅτινα ἦν μοι κέρδη, "However, whatever was gain to me," |
| B (loss, v. 7b-8a) | ταῦτα ἡγῆμαι διὰ τὸν Χριστὸν ζημίαν. ἀλλὰ μενοῦνγε καὶ ἡγοῦμαι πάντα ζημίαν εἶναι, "I now consider loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I also consider all things to be loss," |
| C (Christ, v. 8b) | διὰ τὸ ὑπερέχον τῆς γνώσεως Χριστοῦ Ἰησοῦ τοῦ κυρίου μου, "because of the surpassing greatness of knowing Jesus Christ my Lord," |
| B' (loss, v. 8c-d) | δι' ὃν τὰ πάντα ἐζημιώθην, καὶ ἡγοῦμαι σκύβαλα, "through whom I have lost all things and consider them excrement," |
| A' (gain, v. 8e) | ἵνα Χριστὸν κερδήσω καὶ εὑρεθῶ ἐν αὐτῷ, "that I might gain Christ and be found in him," |

Paul effectively states that his arguments are as good as they get, but that they and all claims that others make are worthless and fruitless for earning status with God, for salvation and inclusion among the people of God. The important thing is to know and gain Christ through

faith. Here is also an echo of the Christ hymn in Philippians 2. The verb ἡγέομαι (“consider”), which appears twice in 3:8, also appears in the Christ hymn (2:6). The way of Christ (2:5) that believers should follow as well as in Paul’s life. Therefore Paul’s exhortation in 1 Corinthians 11:1, “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ” provides the key to understanding the relationship between 3:1-21 and 2:5-11. The verb ἡγέομαι (“consider”), which implies the importance of decisions, shows that his claim to God or religious privilege in front of God is a matter of urgency to be corrected in light of the encounter with Christ. Jesus did not consider “equality with God as something to be exploited, so Paul considers all the previous advantages as a loss for Christ” (Wagner 2007:268). Paul’s story is patterned after the story of Christ (Flemming 2009:166).

Paul chooses to portray all things very negatively in order to emphasise that knowledge of Christ is very noble. Fee (1995:314) argues that Christ is the key from beginning to end. The word “lost everything” or “rubbish” comes from this intention. This great reversal arose not simply on account of Christ (7) but because of the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord (8). This has overwhelming value, making everything else obsolete and comparable to dogs’ dung. This phrase also functions as the key part (C) of the rhetorical chiasm occurring in 7-8. This is a main point that Paul is trying to emphasize (Capes, Reeves & Richards 2007:64-65). Hawthorne (2005:192) regards this to be a climactic clause.

After presenting his standing as a Pharisee, Paul shows that the flesh was better than others (3:4-6), and Paul added a remarkably different self-portrait (7-11). Verse 7 suggests extended and advanced terms in the enlarged picture of Paul’s new life in Christ (8-11). He continues his testimony and reuses accounting terminology. It makes clear that Paul had benefited from his legacy and from his strict observance of the law. As he asserts in verse 4, he has reached all of the desired ideals. But now the main clause presents a shocking reversal in Paul’s assessment of his assets. “Ancient rhetoric used this technique to highlight the correction, thereby impressing it upon the audience” (Anderson 2000:71).

3.4.1.2.2 Second Chiasmus (Phil 3:9)

Paul explains the basis of being found in Christ by adding a compact participial clause. Paul contrasts two things in Christ: my own righteous from adhering to the law and righteousness from God through faith in Christ (Matlock 2007:178).

ἐμὴν δικαιοσύνην	a
τὴν ἐκ νόμου	b
τὴν διὰ πίστεως Χριστοῦ	b'
τὴν ἐκ θεοῦ δικαιοσύνην ἐπὶ τῇ πίστει	a'

Paul effectively summarizes the main points of his argument on ‘righteousness by faith’ and the ‘righteousness of the law.’ Paul offers far superior values compared to that of his opponents. The expression “not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law,” without a doubt rejects all human achievements in relation to the righteousness of the law in Philippians 3:6. Rejection of the law as a way of righteousness is commonly found in Paul’s Epistles (Rom 10:5; Gal. 2:21; 3:11). Circumcision, as presented in Phil 3:9, is a prime example of an achievement based on the law, and is in direct opposition to promoting the righteousness of believers.

Righteousness by *faith* is not a claim to God but a confession that it relies entirely on God (Beare 1973:119). In the context of 3:7-3:8, Silva (2005:158) describes the act of considering everything that causes self-confidence in place of God a loss. Therefore, all pride is excluded. In this respect, there is a parallel with the Christ hymn. Christ presents a model of faith, obedience, renunciation of all privileges, and self-denial. Just as Christ “did not count equality with God as something to be grasped,” Paul, too, is willing to take the example of God, and he is requesting Philippians to imitate him with the same heart, ignoring trust and privilege (2:5; 3:15; 3:17). It is only in the abandonment of privilege that Christ is exalted to be praised. It is also only possible for believers to maintain peace with God and to stay in the fellowship of God by disregarding trust in the flesh.

The passage explains how this special righteousness is received through the “faith of Christ”. However, Greek syntax has become a subject of widespread debate. It can be understood in two different senses. First, πίστεως Χριστοῦ is read in the traditional objective sense of “faith in Christ” (Lightfoot 1999:150; Spence-Jones 1984:113; Müller 1976:115; Silva 2005:161; Hawthorne & Martin, 2015:195; Hansen 2009:241; Fee 1995:325n44, Marshall 1987:91; Reumann 2008:494-96). It means that Paul is found to be in Christ and his faith is directed towards Christ. Second, one can also read it in a subjective and arguably more natural sense of the “faith of Christ.” In this view, the means for achieving the righteousness of God is not the believer’s faith but the faith or faithfulness of Christ (Barth 2004:101-2; O’Brien 1991:398-400; Melick 1991:134; Thurston 2009:124; Witherington 2011:204). Grammatically, both translations are feasible. However, it is a complicated and difficult problem to judge which translation is appropriate, and to understand clearly what the translation implies.

I support the traditional interpretation in light of the flow of the text in Philippians 3 and Paul’s argument, because he, after Philippians 3:9, emphasises participation in Christ’s suffering, and the hope of death and resurrection, so Christ seems the logical object of faith here. As Hansen (2009:242) puts it, “Paul emphasizes the crucial difference between righteousness achieved by keeping the law and righteousness received by dependence on Christ”. Paul is not advocating faith by itself as the means or basis of this extraordinary righteousness. Faith in Christ ignores self-fulfilment and looks to Christ.

In addition, two remarks about faith in 3:9 add emphasis and further clarity. Paul repeats righteousness and faith to strengthen his point. True righteousness comes not from human endeavour but by faith in Christ (see also Gal 2:16; Rom 3:22). This provides a good contrast to bb` (see page. 48). Finally, in the context of Philippians 3, Paul contrasts two competing means to achieve righteousness. According to Deasley (2007:225), it concerns confidence or trust in what is merely human and glorying or trusting in Christ. Therefore, I conclude that what we should focus on in 3:9 is the faith of believers who trust in Christ rather than the faithfulness of Christ himself.

3.4.1.2.3 Third Chiasmus (Phil 3:10-11)

Paul says more about identity found in Christ. This identity is a spiritual association with Christ. Paul speaks of this by repeatedly expressing resurrection, death and suffering. He refers to the death and resurrection of Christ, and then his own death and resurrection in trying to follow Christ's example. Two outer terms are "resurrection" and the two inner terms "suffering" and "death". O'Brien argues that "knowing the power of Christ's resurrection provides the incentive and power to participate in Christ's suffering" (1991:404). This is also constructed in a simple chiastic form (Bloomquist 1993:180; Cousar 2009:74).

A	τὴν δύναμιν τῆς ἀναστάσεως αὐτοῦ	resurrection
	B κοινωνίαν [τῶν] παθημάτων αὐτοῦ	suffering
	B' συμμορφιζόμενος τῷ θανάτῳ αὐτοῦ	death
A'	εἰ πὼς καταστήσω εἰς τὴν ἐξανάστασιν τὴν ἐκ νεκρῶν	resurrection

This is related to the previous statement of Paul being found in Christ, through the righteousness of God, on the basis of believing in Jesus. According to Fee (1995:329), the function of the chiasmus is to emphasise Christ's resurrection as the means of enabling Paul to endure suffering. In particular, it recalls and enlarges "the surpassing greatness of knowing Jesus Christ my Lord" (O'Brien 1991:400). Paul uses the chiastic method to describe Christ's "suffering" in the same way as Christ's death. Paul emphasises the resurrection of Christ as a means of enduring suffering. Cousar (2009:74) suggests that the order of the words resurrection and suffering suggests that the resurrection of Christ is known in the sharing of his suffering. Paul's goal regarding his own identity is to unite with Christ. The true knowledge of Christ is the life in the union that dies and lives with Christ. Paul says that he wants these goals to come true in his life. His death and resurrection would be the life that comes about in him.

Perriman (1991) argues that this experience should be understood in light of Paul's unique apostleship. The suffering that Paul experienced is not characteristic of the life of a common believer (Perriman 1991:78-79). However, Paul is asking the Philippians to imitate him (3:17), and also in other New Testament documents like Heb 10:32-34, Acts 14:22, "to participate in the Christ's suffering". Thus, not only Paul, but the way the believers experience "the power of Christ's resurrection" is to "participate in suffering." Finally, the process from the dead to the resurrection is to imitate his death. As O'Brien (1991:402) puts it, Paul used synthetic verbs ($\sigma\upsilon\nu$) to express his various associations with Christ. To endure death and suffering for the will of God, obedience as a complete devotion to God, to realize God's purpose and righteousness, to follow through complete abandonment of all his prerogatives.

So here, the Christ hymn is once again remembered. Imitating Christ's death is linked to the crucifixion (2:8), the ascension, and the glory of the Second Coming (20-21). In the Christ hymn, Paul could not speak of the death of Christ except for the cross. Thus, resembling the death and cross of Christ includes not only the events of baptism but also the actions of Christians since then. This is exactly what Christ has experienced (2:9-11), the process by which Paul and his followers experience glory (3:21). In 2 Corinthians 4:14, Paul declares, "Knowing that he who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us with you into his presence," after saying that "carrying in the body the death of Jesus". Similarly, in Corinthians 4:17, Paul tells us why he is not afraid of suffering: "For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison."

Verses 3:10-11 is closely related to the story of Christ. The resurrection and ascension of Christ came through obedient suffering and crucifixion (Philippians 2:6-11) (Fowl 2005:155; Daniel 2009:125; Flemming 2009:175). Here in 3:10, "Paul describes his sufferings as God's way of conforming him into the likeness of Christ" (Fee 1995, 334). For Paul, to know Christ intimately involves sharing in his suffering. And Paul can experience the resurrection as long as he is willing to undergo Christ's suffering and death. Holloway (2017:170) emphasises that Paul's continuing efforts to "know" Christ are tantamount to his ongoing quest for salvation, which quest the Philippians had to imitate. In the end, being conformed to his death, for both Paul and his hearers, means living Christ's story in the form of the cross. This involves the work of God in conforming Christians to the likeness of Christ as they share in Christ's

suffering. The fact that God is engaged in the activity is rhetorically important. It constitutes an argument based on divine involvement (Snyman 2006:276).

According to Flemming (2009), the self-giving humility of Christ will be based on relationships within the church. Paul tells of his own story that is patterned after the cruciform story of Christ (Flemming 2009:34). In the text, the story of Christ and the story of Paul become clear models for the Philippians' own way of thinking and behaving (Fee 1999:19). This analysis gives readers insight into the amazing depth of this passage. It also reveals many connections to the remainder of the letter.

It seems that the opponents mentioned in the letter claim that they can become "more complete" in Christ by accepting the ultimate goal of becoming a circumcision (Fee 1995:342). Paul, however, sees *true circumcision* as: loss for the sake of Christ (7-8), righteousness based on faith (9), participating in Christ's suffering and death (10-11), and looking forward to the resurrection (11).

Another noteworthy point in Philippians 3 is the similarity between the pattern of the hymn and the life of Paul. The drama of a clear reversal in Philippians 3:4-11 reminds us of the reversal of the Christ hymn (2:6-11). Paul equates his "self-sacrifice" to Christ's suffering. This is manifested in Philippians 3:4-11 by presenting his own example in the pattern of the abandonment of privilege. It is similar to the aspects of descent, death, and exaltation in the Christ hymn. Paul's example of the narrative reminds us of Christ who gave up his privilege and took the form of a servant. Paul expressed himself in a way that re-echoed the paradoxical pattern of the Redeemer, as expressed in the hymn.

Paul presents his case by mentioning all the privileges he has had (5-6). After meeting with Christ, he considers all these things "damage" and even "rubbish" (7-8), for it is to be found in Christ (8-9). Paul's abandonment of the Jewish heritage in order to discover "knowing Christ" and righteousness based on faith can be attributed to the abandonment of "worldly" possessions for the sake of his present lowly state (Gnilka 1971:186-189). Paul looks forward

to the resurrection of Christ (10-11). Paul's life is exemplified by 2:6-11 of the hymn. This is even more evident in the combination of distinct verbs: ἡγέομαι ("consider") (2:6; 3:7-8), μορφῇ ("form") (2:7; 3:10), εὕρισκω ("find") (2:7; 3:9), κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστὸς ("Jesus Christ is Lord") (2:11; 3:8).

The Hymn is more descriptive than depicted in 3:4-11 (Silva 2005:178). In the hymn, the aspect of God's reversal is illustrated in his life and expressed through the terms of loss and gain (benefit). This aspect of the reversal is important in Paul's rhetorical theological debate. For Paul is associating himself with a pattern of the hymn, that is, Christ, and being willing to endure hardships for the sake of honour. Thus, it could be asserted that Paul's actions were consistent with the pattern of God's salvation in Christ Jesus, even crucifixion/resurrection. Therefore, by participating in the sufferings of Christ, he and all believers become involved in the pattern of God's divine action.

Paul concluded his personal testimony concerning true righteousness in Phil 3:10-11. It is possible to switch from 1-11 to the next 12-21. The testimony of 3:4-11 can be explained as an argument based on his personal experience. The purpose of the argument is to reassure the Philippians once again that there is no truth or future in the teachings of their critics. True righteousness is valuable, as the Torah taught, not as a problem of thought, but by faith in Christ. By using the argument of personal experience, he is bringing the audience back to the essence of intimate righteousness.

To summarise, in the study of Philippians 3:1-11, I have shown that Paul's claims are ingenious and profoundly rhetorical, chiastic, *asyndetic*, antithetic parallelism and various kinds of repetition. It serves to reassure the Philippians of the essence of true righteousness. At the beginning of Philippians 3 Paul deals with the threats ascribed to Judaism. He portrays his (Jewish) opponents as dogs, malicious workers, a formerly passionate figure as one supportive of cutting the flesh. Such claims are said to be useless and false. He is sure the only way to stand with God and be included in his people is by faith in Christ. The reason why Paul makes this remarkable statement can be found in Philippians 3:10. Paul understood

that we as believers should abandon our own merit to boast in Christ. True righteousness comes from God, is given through Christ, and is based on faith.

Paul's example in Philippians 3:1-11 reminds us that discarding what we rely on to establish our identity is painful, but of worth compared to knowing Christ. Paul dramatically describes the relative worthlessness of all privilege and any position compared with the blessing he finds in Christ. Paul emphasises his passion in his relationship with Christ at all costs. The purpose of Philippians 3:1-11 is for Paul to explain true righteousness to the Philippians and to reassure them. Paul, furthermore, is modelling himself as a person who must live in terms of the cross of Christ, not in terms of accomplishment. Paul's story provides a model for the Philippians to follow. Christ humbled himself and obeyed until death, and died on the cross. Christ had pioneered the way forward and Paul, along with him, serves as a model for others.

3.4.2. Analysis of Philippians 3:12-3:21

The dominant rhetorical strategy of Philippians 3:12-21 can be described as encouragement of the Philippians to persevere in pursuing the goal of obtaining Christ. Some scholars see a further sub-section in Philippians 3:4-14. The lack of a connective indicates a shift to a new idea (Melick 1991; Martin 1987; Brown 1997; Fee 1999; Black 1995), and a new aspect is introduced with Paul's assurance in verse 12 that he has not yet been made perfect (Keown 2017:187). Philippians 3:12-21 are distinguished by rhetorical considerations and can be divided into three stages (12-14; 15-16; 17-21). The reasons for dividing this section into three smaller parts are as follows. First, 12 and 13-14 have a parallel structure. Secondly, he uses his own experience to apply this specifically to the Philippians. Third, Paul commands his readers to follow his example and those of others he mentions.

3.4.2.1 Philippians 3:12-14: pressing on toward the goal

In Philippians 3:12-14, Paul writes about pursuing his final prize. In this part, Paul uses self-correction (12-14). Having left behind his "blameless" and zealous life as a law-keeping

Pharisee, Paul says he now aims “to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me” (Phil 3:12). Paul is determined to firmly proceed toward “the prize of the heavenly call on of God in Christ Jesus.” Verses 12-14 reveals “the elegance of Paul’s rhetoric, the depth of feeling he emotes, the unique intimate revelation of his own consuming desire to know Christ and to follow on to know him better all breathe more the spirit of parenetic, or better, epideictic, rather than polemical rhetoric” (Hawthorne 2004:205).

Paul moves the imagery from bookkeeping (and notions of gain and loss) to athletics. Using the athlete metaphor, he depicts himself as a runner not looking back over his shoulder, but running toward the prize. The focus here is not winning or losing but how one ought to run the race (Fowl 2005:161). The image of the race shows how Paul makes use of images well-known to him in his life while at the same time communicating to the Philippian readers through images of Greek athletic games that they also would be familiar with (Metzner 2000:569). He also uses alliteration and assonance based on *k* and *e* sounds⁸. Paul constantly endeavours to gain eternal life through Jesus Christ, his goal in the metaphor of the movement (Keown 2017:188). This metaphorical effect provides the readers with a new point of view, thus focusing their attention more intensely on the issue at hand (Tolmie 2005:99).

Structurally, clauses 12-13 represent chiasmic shapes. A and A’ explain that Paul had not achieved the resurrected life, and he states his determination to achieve it in the middle section. So, as Paul explicitly states in 15 and 17, he urges the Philippians to live in the same way and to have the same mindset as his, knowing that they are not complete.

A οὐχ ὅτι ἤδη ἔλαβον ἢ ἤδη τετελείωμαι, “Not that I have already attained it or have already been made complete”

B διώκω δὲ εἰ καὶ καταλάβω ἐφ’ ᾧ καὶ κατελήμφθην ὑπὸ Χριστοῦ [Ἰησοῦ], “But I press on to seize it, because I have been seized by Christ Jesus”

⁸ *k* sounds is “καὶ καταλάβω ... καὶ κατελήμφθην”, and *e* sounds is “ἐπλανθανόμενος τοῖς δὲ ἔμπροσθεν ἐπεκτεινόμενος”.

A' ἀδελφοί, ἐγὼ ἐμαυτὸν οὐ λογίζομαι κατειληφέναι, “brothers and sisters, I myself do not consider that I have attained it”

The verses of 3:13-14 describe verse 12 in more detail. Verses 12 and 13-14 have the following repeating forms: The chiasmic repetition is emphatic and reminds the readers that Paul is pursuing his goals daily (Keown 2017:206). Paul states two contrasts: I do not consider that I have made it my own (13a), but follow it toward the goal (3:13b-14). Paul expresses this idea in a highly rhetorical, emotion-filled, passionate way; even the form and structure of his sentence radiate the depth of his feelings (Hawthorne 2004:208).

Paul intends to emphasise two things through this structure. First, he emphasises his passionate ambition to achieve his goal through repeating the same basic statement. Second, it stresses the current state and the tension of aspiration for the future. For Paul, the Christian life is an endless exercise toward the goal. In the end, knowing Christ is a daily living with the Lord beyond the level of mere awareness and enlightenment. Paul speaks of the importance being united with the Lord in daily life. Faith is not simply a decision in the past. Faith is running a race toward what is ahead. Paul wants to encourage progress and joy in faith. Paul is trying to help the reader to fully understand his attitude. And in the next verses he urges the Philippians to imitate his life in this regard.

3.4.2.2 Philippians 3:15-16: Exhorting the Philippians to aspire to perfection

Paul focuses on the explanations he has presented in verses 4-14, now summarising them in 15-16. The rhetorical effect of this inclusive language is to engage the audience, to place speaker and hearer on the same footing (Tolmie 2005:141). In verse 15, Paul as the first person, is trying to draw the Philippians to him, because “he and they are both stand equally under the same ethical requirement of not holding an attitude that assumes such a level of spiritual achievement that further striving becomes unnecessary” (Hawthorne 2004:211). According to Keown (2017), Paul is appealing to all the Philippians to imitate his mind set in deciding to “press on”. This includes an appeal to be like Paul and is the final appeal for living up to what believers have in Christ (Keown 2017:189).

The phrase τοῦτο φρονῶμεν (“Let ... us ... think like this”) is reminiscent of Philippians 2:5. The words τοῦτο (“this”) and φρονέω (“think”) are used together three times in Philippians (1:7; 2:5; 3:15). In both 2:5 and 3:15 they are used in exhorting the Philippian church. Verse 2:5 is the introduction to the counsel of 2:6-11, and 3:15 summarises the main exhortations of Philippians 3 (as found in 3:4-11). Both texts deal with a confrontation between the Roman Empire and the Jews who attack the church. Paul considers the attacks of both in the two paragraphs, and strongly exhorts the church to think of his explanation (“this”). According to Osiek (2000:100), the argument is used to encourage them “to keep from both backsliding and stagnating”. In the end, Paul reaches the following conclusion: The perfection of the Christian should actually reveal an attitude of constant effort to reach perfection. According to Keown (2017), Paul appeals to all the Philippians to consider whether they are attaining spiritual maturity. Then they should imitate his example. If we consider the sporting metaphor found in this passage, he urges the Philippians to encourage full maturity like an athlete (Keown 2017:212). He then exhorts them to persevere in living that same gospel, making it plain that he also needs to do so.

In this paragraph, Paul argues that the eschatological desire for resurrection and complete salvation is not accomplished by accepting and preserving religious practices. If the Philippians pursue the example of their opponents, who are of the opinion that future promises can be achieved through circumcision and observance of the law, then they are seeking vain goals and missing the prize. Only knowledge of Christ, and participation in the life of death, suffering and resurrection, enables us to attain the goals that are in Christ but not yet realized. “To trust in the flesh” is a life of “destruction,” but to live a “life in Christ” is to look forward to the resurrection of the dead and re-appearance of the Savior.

In contrast, the opponents argue that the way to realize Israel’s eschatological covenant is to become God’s true people through circumcision. Paul directly contradicts this in 2-3, and in 12-16 he indirectly refutes this claim by leaving eschatological desires and covenant realizations in the future. Paul’s strategy, which overturns the claims of the opponents in this paragraph, is about perfection. He is reversing their argument not through biblical quotations but through his own example. He begins by showing that his previous values were reversed (5-6), articulating the values of the knowledge of Christ (8-11), and expressing his continuous

struggle to realize the eschatological goal/prize (12-16). This will only be realized at the end of time (20-21).

Paul concludes his answer about the Jews with his promise to pursue that which has priority in his life and to press on to eternal life. He does not claim the outcome of his “race”, but he runs confidently without looking back, like a great Olympic athlete. He appeals to the Philippians to think and act like this as well. He is convinced that problems concerning those who oppose his view will be resolved by the Spirit of God.

3.4.2.3 Philippians 3:17-21: Commanding the Philippians to follow his and others’ example.

In 3:17-21, Paul extends the whole of the exhortation to be perfect as is found in 3:15-16. All the believers in Christ at Philippi should follow the example of Paul in seeking “to know Christ” above all else (Holloway 2017:178). He is struggling in the same race that they are running, and has also not yet achieved perfection (Silva 2005:179). In the face of the confrontation by the Jews, Paul has refuted their arguments and explained their claims to the Philippians. Now, at the end of his explanation, Paul encourages them to imitate him and not follow the people in question. Paul tells them to follow his example and supports the recommendation in 3:17, for which he offers two reasons in respectively 3:18-19 and 3:20-21.

Verse 17 plays an important role in Philippians 3. Daniel (2009:136) argues that v. 17 provides the key to the structure of the letter. Paul alternates personal examples with instructions to the Philippians about their own actions. The appeal for imitation in verse 17 explicitly indicates an implicit petition to imitate Paul as shown earlier in the letter (1:12-26; 3:1-11). This passage also calls us to a deeper consideration of Christ’s example. Keown (2017:222) says that the language focuses on the example of imitating Christ in Philippians. Paul invites the Philippians to imitate him (3:17) as he imitates Jesus (2:5-11) and indirectly to imitate Timothy and Epaphroditus (2:19-30). Paul wants the Philippians, who faced danger, to hold onto what he taught. Paul suggests himself as a model for those who followed the way of Christ, the way of the cross. Paul’s imitation shows the way to imitate Christ.

In verses 18 to 19 Paul talks about a group of people whom he refers to as the “enemies of the cross.” His purpose is to reveal the contrast between them and the positive example of true believers described in Philippians 3:20-21 (Runge 2011:15-17; Cousar 2001:176). It is important to note once again in v. 19 is the use of the rhetorical technique of vilification. Here, the enemies of the cross are described as selfish, as those who are only focused on themselves. Paul seeks to persuade the Philippians to accept his view of the enemies of the cross. He vilifies these enemies effectively by portraying them as selfish. The lifestyle he commands the Philippians to follow in 3:17 is exactly the opposite of the lifestyle of those enemies. Paul repeats his warning about the destruction and falsehood of the enemy because of his intention to show how miserable following the enemy is, and eventually to persuade the Philippians to live a life in the imitation of Paul.

The main idea of 20-21 comes from the recommendation of verse 17. In other words, 20-21 were to support the apostolic command because it was Paul’s main concern to follow the right example (Silva 2005:183). Unlike the opponent, those who imitate the pattern of the hymn are those who have a heavenly citizenship and everlasting hope in Jesus Christ (3:20). This is the true eschatological desire and goal of circumcision. In 3:21, Paul expresses his belief in the transformation of the body that will arise when Christ comes. There is no reason to boast about other believers because there is no physical pride here, since perfection is achieved through humility. If someone wants to follow the example of Paul (2:6-7), to imitate the sufferings of Christ (3:1-16), he/she may also desire to be transformed like the body of Christ in its glory.

This section describes a strong connection with the theology of the cross, which is expressed in 2:6-11, by using terms and concepts that are common to 2:6-11 (Hawthorne 2005:68-70; Reumann 2008:594-597).

3:20-21	2:6-11
σὺ μμορφον (3:21)	μορφῇ/μορφῇν (2:6. 7)

ὑπάρχει (3:20)	ὑπάρχων (2:6)
μετασχηματίζει (3:21)	σχῆματι (2:7)
ταπεινῶσεως (3:21)	ἐταπεινώσεν (2:8)
δύνασθαι... ὑποτάξαι... τὰ πάντα (3:21)	πᾶν γόνυ κάμψη (2:10)
κύριον Ἰησοῦν Χριστόν (3:20)	κύριος Ἰησοῦς Χριστός (2:11)
δόξης (3:21)	δόξαν (2:11)

Therefore, the concept of the cross is also an important key in presenting the eschatological hope of the believer. It is not only a symbol of suffering, but also a symbol of hope and redemption. The hymn in the rhetorical controversy of Paul's opponent in Philippians 3 plays an important role in expressing his various interests.

Philippians 3:20-21 have frequently been identified as being parallel to 2:6-11 (Hawthorne 2005:168-70; Reumann 2008:594-597). Neil Planner (1956:8-9) briefly described the literary and doctrinal parallels between the two. His point supports the position that the character of Christ is the core of Paul's argument in 20-21. Most importantly, these linguistic connections show that Philippians 3 is integral to the letter. The connection of the subject of imitation is covered in detail in the next chapter.

To summarise, Paul's rhetorical strategy in 3:12-21 encourages the Philippians to persevere in pursuing the goal of obtaining Christ. This part consists of three stages. Paul does not regard himself as a man who has accomplished and completed everything just yet. Therefore he says he is not perfect, but he is moving toward this goal (14-16). Unlike the Jews claiming full identity of Israel through the law, especially through the practice of circumcision, Paul intends to achieve his goal in living a life of unity with Christ in Christ. Paul repeats these claims in verses 15 and 16. Paul, who asserted that Jews comprised a phoney Israel, is now

exhorting the Philippians to follow the example of himself and others (3:17-20). Paul counsels that the Church in Philippi should be patient in pursuing the goal of obtaining Christ.

3.5 Conclusion

I have examined Philippians 3 and the rhetorical situation and what Paul's exhortations comprise. Through my analysis of Philippians 3, I confirm a close relationship between this chapter and the letter as a whole that is not out of context concerning the structure and flow of the whole letter. Philippians 3 is clearly shown as part of a single letter within the overall structure.

In summary, there are two obvious rhetorical situations in Philippians 3. There is a warning to the Jews and an exhortation to the recipients to follow Paul's example. Encouragement in this situation is given in response to situations in which the Philippians experienced adversity and discord. Paul is increasing the effectiveness of communication with the Philippian believers through various rhetorical strategies. Influenced by his communication, he encourages readers to persevere in pursuing the common goal of obtaining Christ.

The summary of the rhetorical analysis of Philippians 3 is presented as follows: Paul rebukes these claims after they have made a harsh criticism of their opponents (3:2) and argues for true circumcision. True circumcision (3:3) means the loss of everything for Christ (7:8), righteousness from God that depends on faith (9), participation in the suffering and death of Christ (10-11), and looking forward to the resurrection. The desire for eschatological resurrection and complete salvation is not guaranteed by accepting and observing religious practices. If the Philippians follow the example of their enemies, who are of the view that the promises of the future can be obtained through circumcision and observance of the law, then they too are misdirected, missing the goal and the prize. Only knowledge of Christ, that is, his death and suffering, and participation in the life of the resurrection, can be achieved in Christ, but not yet realized (12-16). "Trusting the flesh" will lead to "destruction," but a "life in Christ" looks forward to "the resurrection from the dead" and "manifestation of the Savior."

Paul is developing his arguments through his own example, not through biblical quotations. He begins by showing that the opponents are presently claiming to have reversed their past values (5-6), expressing the value of knowledge of Christ (8-11), expressing his continuing struggle to realize the eschatological goals/prize (12-16), demonstrating only what was realized at the end of the last days (20-21). By imitating the pattern of the cross shown in the hymn, one moves in the direction of heavenly citizenship and salvation, the hope of Jesus Christ (3:20). This is the true eschatological desire and goal of circumcision. If believers want to follow the example of Paul (3:1-16), by following the example of Christ's suffering (2:6-11), they may also have hope of being transformed like the body of Christ in all its glory.

Chapter 4

Thematic coherence: Imitation in focus

4.1 Introduction

For Aristotle, the use of rhetoric is the most effective way to change an individual or group's behavior, opinion or attitude. An excellent ethical example is first made available to which an appeal can be made, and then the individual or group is encouraged to emulate them (Aristotle 1954:5). Although we cannot confidently say that the apostle Paul is using Aristotle's theory of rhetoric, we can hardly deny that Paul frequently presents Jesus Christ or himself as an example for the Church saints to emulate (Rom 15:5, 1 Cor 11:1, 1 Thess 1:6). Imitation is the essence of the relationship between Jesus and his disciples. In Philippians, Paul presents Jesus Christ and himself as an example to be imitated (2:6-11; 3:17). By studying the subject of imitation, which is prominent in Philippians, I would like to study the theme of imitation, which is a unified theme in the letter. I will also analyze the relationship between the theme of imitation (3:17) and Christ's hymn⁹ to prove their unity, and further explore what a desirable Christian life should look like.

4.2 Rhetorical features of imitation

The reason why imitation is emphasized in Philippians can be related to the rhetorical situation of Philippi. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the Philippians were faced with adversity and lost their sense of joy, apparently brought about by internal conflict of some sort. Such a negative situation in the Philippian church is a rhetorical urgency that has led to Paul's call for the imitation of Christ. Meeks (1993:5-6) approaches imitation from an ethical point of view arguing that the ethics of imitation plays the role of community ethics that helps sustain motivation to overcome the negative situation within the church. The theme of imitation has the clear purpose of addressing the conflict and divisions of the Philippian church (1:27).

⁹ I would like to use the term "Christ hymn" to refer to the Philippians 2:6-11 passage.

Paul exhorts them to overcome and endure the situation of conflict through the character of Christ (2:6-11), and through his character as the apostle of grace (1:1; 7-8; 3:8-10; 4:10-13).

The basis for imitation is “identification,”¹⁰ which amounts to attempts to possess the same qualities as Christ. Identification requires transcendence of one’s current identity, in that it can only be accomplished by discarding the old personality of the individual. While rhetoric is the technique of persuading people, identification is the most powerful means of persuasion.. Philippians emphasizes identification with Christ, emphasizing ἐνὶ πνεύματι (“one spirit”), μιᾷ ψυχῇ (“one mind”) (1:27), φρονῆτε (“same mind”) (2:2; 4:2), ἀγάπην (“same love”), σύμψυχοι (“united in spirit”) (2:2). All the terms used here are associated with Christ and his crucifixion. Transcendence demands self-emptying, following Christ’s example, which takes away the ‘old self’ before knowing Christ (2 Cor 5:17; Eph 4:22; Col 3:9). In Philippians, to transcend oneself for Christ is to keep one’s death in mind (1:20; 2:17; 30). Philippians cannot achieve the transcendence that overcomes the situation without self-emptying, and they cannot participate in the holy life of Christ without it.

The rhetorical features of imitation appear in various forms based on the rhetorical situation of the Philippian church. The theme of imitation is based on the hymn of Philippians 2:6-11, which is the original pattern initiated by Jesus. In the following section, I would like to explore the link between the hymn and imitation, and provide evidence to show that the theme of imitation is unified in Philippians. However, before doing so, I would like to show that imitation has a philosophical background.

4.3 Hellenism and imitation

Epistemological cosmology is also evident in the ideas of the Jewish philosopher Philo and historian Josephus under the influence of Greek philosophy. Philo argues that children should

¹⁰ According to Burke, all literary works are creations that synchronize readers with the artist’s view in certain situations. The identity of the artist as a reader is the identification work, and all the literary works contain the rhetoric of this identification (Burke 1973:109)

imitate their fathers, as humans should imitate God (Michaelis 1975:664). Josephus emphasizes that human beings are not able to imitate God because they are fallen, but highlights the need to consciously imitate the actions and personality of others (Michaelis 1975:666). Their ideas are influenced by Plato's epistemological cosmology, and the philosophy of original and copy is deeply embedded in their ideas.

The notion of the imitation of epistemological cosmology does not only appear in philosophical theory. Greek philosophy itself recommended that its students learn the philosophical ideas from its founders and imitate their lives. In addition, in the classical Greek world and the New Testament period, the philosophy of imitation was widespread in the field of art, including various trends and forms that include history, songs, dramas, and even novels. Imitation was also required in specific skills such as painting, architecture, and so on. Not only was imitation used by the great teachers, historians, and poets of the past as well as the present, it was also a necessary step in the academic practice of creative writing. Thus, literary imitation was very common in written works (Struck 1995:111-124).

In literature, imitation varies from imitation of style (λέξις), imitation of philosophical thought (διάνοια), imitation of composition (μῦθος), and character (ἦθος). This tradition of imitation of Greek philosophy is also reflected in the New Testament. In particular, the Synoptic Gospels recorded by various authors at different times can be said to be a creative work, centered on the suffering of Jesus Christ, the representation of which was created through imitation of linguistic skills, and style (Baban 2006:45-51). Some scholars consider the parables in the Gospels as an imitation of the literary character of Aristotle (Via 1967:100). If the role of the metaphor is the counsel of the ethical dimension, then most of the parables serve as a practical model of life, which would have been an example of life that the early church followed and imitated (Hedrick 1994:47-50).

It is through academic training in rhetoric that the imitation trend in Hellenism is applied to the practical part of life. In particular, Imitation means that the exercise takes a dramatic form in which one or more characters is imagined as speaking (Kennedy 1983:64). To describe character (*prosopopoeia*) is to make a literary construct of a specific character, and describe

or address it. This rhetorical exercise may also involve talking (*sermocinatio*) and debating (*dialogismus*) (Lanham 1991:52) with the personality and voices of others. It is only used in speeches to describe the character of a renowned figure or fictitious character. Actors in the play are used to imitate the character of a famous person or to portray a specific character and personality (Stowers 1995:181).

Thus, the philosophy of imitation in Hellenism is based on epistemological cosmology, which has its origin in Greek philosophy, and has become a widespread principle of life spreading into the everyday life of people. Just as the structure of the universe has the form of original and copy, so too does human life exist according to original and copy. In other words, the life of imitation faces an ethical demand. This training is repeated through rhetoric, and eventually develops into a conscious and intentional imitation – the ethics of imitation. It is true that the rhetoric of imitation in the Greek world has become a philosophical theory, which has created ethical demands on people. I therefore argue that the rhetoric of imitation influenced the New Testament writers and literature. Philippians describes Paul as a character that Christians should follow in order to imitate Jesus Christ (Castelli 1991:22). How Philippians goes about this, will now be described.

4.4 Imitation in Philippians

In this chapter, I am going to examine how imitation appears in Philippians. But first, I would like to briefly explain how the word “imitation” is used in the Bible. In the New Testament, the words associated with imitation appear in various forms. The most important of these words is the Greek, μιμητής¹¹, which is most commonly translated as “imitator,” and the verb “to imitate” is also found (μιμέομαι “to imitate”, see also συσχηματίζω “to mold”)¹². To imitate someone, there must be a “type”. The word for “type” is τύπος (“type”)¹³ or

¹¹ Μιμητής (“imitator”): 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Eph 5:1; 1 Thess 1:6; 2:14; Heb 6:12. In Phil 3:17, the term “Συμμιμητής” derived from “Μιμητής” is used.

¹² Μιμέομαι: 2 Thess 3:7; 3:9; Heb 13:7; 3 John 11. Συσχηματίζω: Rom 12:2; 1 Pet 1:14

¹³ τύπος (“type”): Rom 6:17; Phil 3:17; 1 Thess 1:7

ὑπόδειγμα (“example”)¹⁴, which is translated as “example” or “pattern”. First Peter 2:21 uses other terms in one passage: “For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example (ὑπογραμμός), so that you might follow in his steps (τοῖς ἴχνεσιν αὐτοῦ).” The word for imitation (μίμησις) used by Paul in Philippians is a *hapax legomenon* in the New Testament, and is unique in ancient Greek literature (O'Brien 1991:445). This indicates that it might be a Pauline neologism (Bockmuehl 1998:228). Paul uses this word (συμμιμητής) in Philippians to suggest that the Philippians should become like Paul and Christ (Flemming 2009:195). The language of Paul's imitation in Philippians is designed to produce an ordered and harmonious diversity. In the section below I will briefly indicate how the subject of imitation appears in Philippians.

4.4.1 Philippians 1

The Philippians were partners in the gospel with Paul (1:5). His entire experience, including his chains of imprisonment, served to advance the gospel (12). Now, Paul exhorts them to conduct themselves in all they do in a manner “worthy of the Gospel” (1:27). Paul presses the Philippian believers to live the Christian life to the full and to make certain that in all their difficulties they are living like Christ and working together in unity. The subject of imitation first appears in 1:27-30. Paul presents himself as an ideal model for the Philippians to imitate. In this particular passage, Paul uses his experience of suffering for the gospel as an example to encourage the Philippian readers. Paul's remark that “engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have” (1:30) is literally in line with 4:9 (“What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me”). Paul's example serves as a model for the Philippians to follow.

Paul emphasizes that one of the most important things that Christians must observe (Gal 1:23; 2:10; 3:2) is to live in a way that conforms to the gospel of Christ (1:27). But what exactly does this mean? Witherington (2011:102) describes “the life worthy of the Gospel” as follows: By “Gospel” Paul means the story of Jesus' life. An example of authentic Christian living is found in the life of Christ, which in turn becomes paradigmatic, as seen in 2:5-11.

¹⁴ ὑπόδειγμα (“example”): John 13:15; Heb 4:11; 8:5; 9:23; James 5:10; 2 Pet 2:6

Christians are to imitate the story of Christ's self-sacrificial, self-humbling behavior and leave the glorification to God after the fact. They are to live out of and according to the Christ story. Fowl (2005:59) notes that Paul's display of a life "worthy of the gospel of Christ" could be a model for the Philippians. Therefore, to live a life worthy of the gospel is to follow Christ's example.

4.4.2 Philippians 2

The theme of imitation in Philippians 2 appears in the Christ hymn too. Paul presents Christ's life as a powerful example that the Philippian church should resemble (2:5). Many scholars assert that the Christ hymn clearly presents Jesus as the ultimate model for the Philippians to imitate (Thurston 2009:80; O'Brien 1991:253-62; Lightfoot 1999:110; Müller 1976:77; Hendriksen 1962:102; Fee 1995:199-201; Bockmuehl 1998:122-123). Paul presents Christ as the great example of humility, selflessness, sacrifice, and suffering for God's mission to address the conflict in Philippi. As O'Brien (1991:1254) puts it, "The Philippians are to have among themselves the same disposition and manner of life as Christ Jesus in his freely willed renunciation of the heavenly power and glory that He possessed before the incarnation."

In the hymn, Christ becomes a living example of self-sacrificial love, as a *hypodeigma* to be followed by all Christians (Michaelis 1975:669). In Philippians 2:6-11, Paul describes Christ's character through an ontological form. Christ was originally the form of God (2:6), but he emptied by himself by taking the form of a slave (2:7). The character of Christ's self-sacrifice brings about metamorphosis. Incarnation eventually corresponds to a personality that lowers himself (2:8). "He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross" (2:8). This describes the ontological character that Christ obeys to the end to fulfill God's will (Fee 1999:89-91). In the same way, the Philippians should imitate Jesus' self-humility, absolute obedience, suffering, and attitude toward life (1996:281-287; Pretorius 1998:557).

Phil 2:6-11 describes the attributes of Christ's character-self-emptying, self-degrading, and self-sacrificing. Self-emptying implies that Christ, who is equal to God, renounced his vested

rights and privileges. If self-emptying is a conscious decision, self-deprecation is the act of determination that Christ took on the form of a slave, and was made in the likeness of men. If Christ becomes a human being, the salvation of people, the will of God, cannot be achieved. There must be self-sacrifice, which requires obedience even to death. Self-sacrifice, which symbolizes the death and resurrection of the cross, contains the character of sustainable obedience to fulfill God's plan and will. It is important to note that the Christ hymn, which is presented as an absolute example of this pattern, is introduced by the imperative mood: "Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus" in Phil 2:5. *Φρονέω* ("mind") is a term frequently used by Paul, which does not merely express an activity of the intellect, but also a movement of the will (Silva 2014:620). According to Bockmuehl (1997:122), in Paul's mind, the imitation of Christ is central to Christian living. Furthermore, the cruciform shape of the Christian life that permeates Paul's thought is seen in his language of suffering, sacrifice and death, and is directly related to imitating the Christ-pattern (Keown 2016:375). Paul uses the hymn as a basis for imitation throughout the letter.

Paul presents the dynamic examples of two men, "Timothy and Epaphroditus, who embody the Christ-like attitudes he has been encouraging his readers to have in their relationships with one another" (Hansen 2009:191). Paul presents Timothy as a positive example to imitate, suggesting Timothy's genuine concern for the happiness of the Philippians (2:19-24) and the sacrificial act of Epaphroditus (2:25-30). These were Paul's beloved co-workers, whom he cherished. Paul proudly talks about them as faithful ambassadors of Christ. Their priority was the work of Christ Jesus and they were completely undeserving of God's grace. They talk about the partnership in the gospel and show what a true partnership looks like for the benefit of the gospel. According to Fowl (2005:132, 135), Timothy urged the Philippians to imitate the example of Christ. There is no doubt that Paul exhorted the members of the Philippian church to imitate him, as well as Timothy and Epaphroditus (3:17).

4.4.3 Philippians 3

The topic of imitating Paul appears in 3:17. In order to encourage the Philippian readers to live morally worthy lives in the Gentile world, Paul presents himself as model to "follow" in their own lives and other faithful Christian lives. Since the values of the Gentile world is in

conflict with those of Christians, Paul explicitly instructs them, “Brothers, join in imitating me, and keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example you have in us” (3:17).

Paul does not urge the Philippians to imitate his own accomplishments or advantages. Rather, he implores them to imitate his willingness to share in Christ's sufferings (3:10; 1:30; 2:17) and yield self-interest for the sake of others (3:7-9; 2:3-8, 25-30). Furthermore, he calls upon the community to reject themselves (1 Cor 11:1) and to be willing to suffer for others (1 Thess 1:6; 2:14), and follow the example in order to lose everything and strive hard to know Christ. That is, to imitate Paul, as he is imitating Christ. Hansen (2009:262) claimed that “imitating Paul is the way to imitate Christ.” Paul is imitating Christ, and Timothy and Epaphroditus are imitators of Paul, who imitate Christ, and the Philippians are imitating those who follow Paul. This interpretation presupposes that Paul is an imitator of Christ.

The fact that Paul himself, who commands the Philippians to imitate himself, imitates Christ, can be seen in 3:10: “I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death” (Phil 3:10). Here Paul is able to see that imitation has the same form of existence. Paul emphasizes the type of existence of Jesus Christ as the archetype and pattern of the imitation, by emphasising imitation. To testify that Jesus Christ is the image of God (2 Cor 4:4; Col 1:15), and at the same time, the form of God (Phil 2:6), emphasizes his divine character (Bhem 1964:752). Though the same form as his death was presented (3:10), the more fundamental form of Christ's form is in the Christ hymn. When Paul says, “Join in imitating me,” he means imitating the “I” as the character of Christ described above, and eventually to imitate the character of Christ in 2:6-10 (Bruce 1989:127). In short, imitation demands that the Philippians should follow in his steps. Paul is the pattern to imitate.

4.4.4 Philippians 4

Philippians 4 again brings up the subject of imitation, with a greater emphasis on morally reasonable behavior. Paul challenged the reader to think about the six virtues listed in 4:8, and then encourages them to imitate him (4:9). According to Witherington (2011), Paul

alternates between calling the audience “brothers” and “beloved” in 4:8-9, using the language of the family. The relationship between Paul and his converts is close. He is the spiritual parent here, encouraging his spiritual children, and providing advice and imperatives where needed (Witherington 2011:257). Phil 4:9 shows exactly what the audience had to do with it. Based on this relationship, his hope is for them to imitate him as their spiritual parent who models good faith and good behavior, and he expects them and join him in imitating Christ. De Boer (1962:187) explains that Paul’s words here (4:9) “indicate that Paul saw himself engaged in his teaching functions not only in his official acts of giving instruction, but also in the example he set in all of his life and conduct.”

Throughout and at the end of this letter, Paul clearly presents himself as a model for the Philippians to imitate and commands them to follow his example. The Philippians should come to the conclusion that they have learned, received, heard, and seen things in Paul’s life. It is potentially “Paul’s last direct instruction and so speaks of them imitating his example in a holistic term” (Keown 2017:371). In his final recommendation, Paul reminds the Philippian readers of the interconnected imitation that he emphasizes throughout the letter. This is the final exhortation to the need for morally justified action and how moral life can be achieved by imitating Paul and Christ, Timothy and Epaphroditus and other sincere leaders.

So far, I have examined the theme of imitation as it appears in Philippians. In particular, Paul begins with the appeal for the Philippians to imitate moral justice. The unity of this subject is sufficient proof that Philippians is a single letter. In the next chapter, I will reveal the thematic unities by examining the relationship that appeared between imitation and kenosis in the hymn (2:6-11).

4.5 The relationship between kenosis in the Christ hymn and mimesis in 3:17

In the previous section I have looked at imitation as a subject that flows throughout the letter. However, in this section I would also like to explore the relationship between the theme of imitation and the Christ hymn to demonstrate the thematic unity in the letter. Furthermore, I

would also like to present the resulting portrayal of what constitutes a Christian's life through this link.

4.5.1 The kenosis in Philippians 2:5-11

In the New Testament, there are also early Christ hymns associated with the Philippians Christ hymn (Col 1:15-20; 1 Tim 3:16; 1 Pet 2:22-23). As one of these hymns, Philippians (2:6-11) has generated much interest and discussion among scholars. In particular, the text is acknowledged as one of the most profound and comprehensive hymns about Christ among the New Testament hymns. Most modern translations of this hymn present it in a style that emphasizes its poetic characteristics, showing many features that are clearly distinct from common prose. According to Silva (2005), although one can hardly prove that verses 6-11 in whole or in part constituted a formal poem or hymn, it would be foolhardy to deny the strong poetic qualities of the passage. Even the label "elevated prose" does not do justice to the rhythm, parallelisms, lexical links, and other features that characterize these verses (Silva 2005:93). I concur with Silva, and will therefore use the term "Christ hymn" to refer to Philippians 2:5-11.

A brief review of recent scholarship shows that this hymn has been studied extensively,¹⁵ although the range of viewpoints makes it difficult to identify a single school of thought or interpretation. The main topics discussed about the hymn are its origin and authorship, conceptual backgrounds, form and structure, and purpose. The purpose of this section, then, is not to investigate all these controversial issues, but rather to examine the function and role of the hymn in the letter, and the *kenosis* that appears in the hymn. The aim being to prove how the central idea of the hymn relates to imitation.

4.5.1.1 Function of the hymn

¹⁵ O'Brien's (1991:186-188) reference list contains nearly 100 articles about Philippians 2:6-11.

In this section, I would first want to clarify my point of view regarding the function of the hymn. There is a difference of opinion between the ethical interpretation and the soteriological interpretation of the meaning of the Christ hymn. On the one hand, it does not contain the idea of Paul's salvation, but refers to the ethical example of Christ (Bloomquist 1993:166-169; Kim 1994:237; O'Brien 1991:257-265; Schweitzer 1955:111). On the other hand, the Christ hymn presents Christ's death and resurrection as our salvation (Käsemann 1968:45-88; Martin 1987:25; Davorin 1995:65-79).

Based on recent research, Hellermann (2010:85-102) has proposed an approach that provides a new perspective on traditional issues based on the background of political and cultural history. He presents an ethical perspective on the text in a new way by providing its political, cultural, and historical context. Hellerman has provided a general introduction and some very specific aspects—a rather unusual combination—in conjunction with an illuminating use of inscriptions from Philippi. Philippians 2:6-11 presents the '*cursus pudorum*' which is the opposite of political culture. Hellerman's combination of a general introduction and honour with specific local evidence and substantive exegetical commentary provides a theoretically well-grounded understanding of the New Testament texts in their first-century context. However, I argue that the core of the hymn serves as an example for ethical Christian living in the apocalyptic community, because the context of the hymn is ethical and has an important function in strengthening the proper behavior of Christians.

The hymn plays a strategic role in context of Philippians. In other words, it has a direct basis for Paul's exhortation to act morally justified. The Christ hymn is used to reinforce ethical content. Hawthorne (2004:79) writes, "The motivation for Paul to use the Christian praise here is not theological but ethical. His purpose is not to teach the doctrines but to strengthen the teachings related to Christian life." In addition, the quotation of early Christian hymns also attaches importance or authority to Paul's ethical assertions, as demonstrated in the content of 1 Thessalonians 4:14 and 1 Corinthians 15:3-5. According to Martin (1983), however, this hymn is also used here because it represents a confession shared with the recipients, and Paul repeated it here to make them accept the main points of the paragraph. The point here is to live under the sovereignty of Christ, which exhorts believers in difficult situations, i.e., the affliction experienced by the Philippian community (Martin 1983:34-35).

Interest in morally appropriate behavior first appears in 1:27-2:4, which corresponds to the main part of the letter: “Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ” (1:27). The same concern for morally appropriate behavior is also at the center of 2:12-18, where Paul similarly exhorts the believers in Philippians: “Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed, so now, not only as in my presence but much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling” (2:12), “Do all things without grumbling or disputing” (2:14), “that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and twisted generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world” (2:15). The Christ hymn is interposed between the two paragraphs (1:27-2:4 and 2:12-18) and 2:5-11 provides the basis for these ethical exhortations. The hymn is quoted in these verses and provides an explanation of Christ as the most fundamental model for moral behavior (2:5). In conclusion, the function of the hymn is twofold: First, it shows a radical reversal in relation to Paul’s concept of mimesis. The humble are honoured and gain by death. This order of reversal enables Paul’s imitation. Second, Paul exhorts the Philippians and emphasizes what they should do in the community (2:1-4). The hymn shows the principle of self-denial. In this respect, the hymn enables mimesis. Paul exhorts them to not only follow him, but also to imitate Christ (2:19-30). Christ’s attitude toward suffering and obedience is exemplified on the cross (2:8). Paul presents himself as an example with those who live as Christ presented (2:29).

4.5.1.2 Central Ideas of the hymn

Verses 6-8 describe Christ’s humiliation, and verses 9-11 describe Christ’s exaltation. In the first part of the hymn, Jesus’ actions are described, while the second part contains the actions of God. In contrast to Jesus’ actions (lowering Himself), “God’s actions now exalt Him. According to Bonnie (2003:83), “God exalted Christ as a reward for His obedience, and for emptying and lowering Himself”. God exalted Jesus by giving Him a distinguished name above all names and becoming the glory of all things: “The superior name above all names is the noble name “Lord,” which belongs only to God Himself” (Hawthorne 2004:126). Jesus thus becomes a superior Being, with a greater name than anyone else – “Lord”. The hymn strongly emphasizes Jesus’ Lordship.

We often call Pauline theology a “theology of the cross”. The cross is at the center of Pauline thought. Hooker (2000) argues that verse 2:8 explains the descent of Christ and at the same time links up with Christ’s ascent. Therefore, the theme of the hymn as a whole appears to be the pre-existence and exaltation of Christ (Hooker 2000:501-502). However, central to Paul’s exhortation is not the pre-existence and exaltation of Christ, but the humanity of Christ, residing in between the pre-existence and exaltation of Christ.

Paul’s emphasis in the Christ hymn can be found in 2:8. The practical aspect of the human form of Jesus is to “humble himself by becoming obedient to the point of death”. It is to die on the cross. Through this, Paul is shifting the focus of the hymn from the pre-existence and exaltation of Christ, to His obedience unto death on the cross.¹⁶ Paul emphasizes the theology of the cross in the Christ hymn. The most important part of Paul’s interpretation is the interpretation of Christ’s obedience in 2:8 as “the death of the cross”. Through the theology of the cross, Paul’s attention is not only on the pre-existence and incarnation of Christ, but also on the exaltation of Christ and the humanity of Christ. It is because the humanity of Jesus Christ, His humility, slave-like form, and death of the cross are central to Pauline theology. In other words, Paul’s central statement was not only about what Jesus was like but also how he acted. Paul states that Jesus existed in the image of God, but he emphasizes that He did not seek to be equal with God. He also took on the form of a slave, demonstrating the distinct act of self-emptying. Paul emphasized that Jesus’ lowered Himself, taking the same form as a man (even unto death).

The question that comes to the fore here is, why did Paul place a hymn with this powerful message in this particular letter? The natural answer would be that the Philippian church needed to hear such a strong message. For instance, that Jesus gave up his Lordship, or it was in response to a situation that arose. Among the various situations that appear in Philippians, it is the part that makes reference to opponents in Philippians 3 that may supply further clues for the composition of the text. Paul’s confrontation with other Jews, and also especially with the Roman Empire, which was a theological and political attack on the Lordship of Christ, is the most appropriate background for this text. Other Jews theologically attacked the

¹⁶ Paul explained this thought in Romans 5:19 by saying, “For as by the one man’s disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man’s obedience the many will be made righteous.”

Philippian church to renounce the Lordship of Christ. In this situation, Paul offered a hymn to confirm Jesus' Lordship and declare his faithfulness to Him.

In confrontation with the opponents, one finds the motif for the imitation of Christ through which Paul eventually, either directly or indirectly, exhorted the Philippians. It declares his ultimate purpose, and exhorts the Philippians not to get frustrated or give up in difficult circumstances, but rather to keep their faith to the end. In short, one can conclude that the Christ hymn is closely connected to Paul's exhortation in Philippians 3 to imitate his example.

4.5.1.3 Kenosis in the hymn

Lutheran theologians of the 19th century explain *kenosis* as the humanity of Jesus Christ and the abandonment of his divinity-omnipotence, omniscient, universal sovereignty. However, other contemporary theologians have adopted a more moderate stance. For instance, Gore (1963:763-764) interpreted the incarnation of Christ as a limitation to the activity of his divinity, but maintains his divinity.

Concerning the kenosis of Christ, Strong (1996:704) summarizes the various interpretive viewpoints, as follows: First, Christ gave up all divine attributes (Gess 1984). Second, Christ gave up relative attributes only (Thomasius 1845). Third, Christ gave up the independent exercise of divine attributes. Fourth, Christ gave up the use of divine attributes (Eastern Orthodox). Fifth, Christ acted as if he did not possess divine attributes (Anselm 1969). However, due to the limited scope of this study, I will not discuss these various viewpoints in detail here, but rather focus specifically on the notion of *kenosis* as it appears in the text of Philippians.

In verse 6, the meaning of “emptying oneself” from the word “emptiness” is the opposite of being full. This word is used elsewhere to mean “empty” (Lk 1:53), “empty-hand” (Mk 12:3, Lk 20:10), “in vain” (1 Thess 3:5, 1 Cor 15:58; 2 Cor 6:1). The problem is that Christ said that He had “emptied himself,” but what is meant here by “emptiness”? As pointed out earlier, Orthodox theologians interpreted the emptiness of the incarnation of Christ as not wearing

the body of God but wearing the form of the slave (Walvoord 1961:105). In other words, the incarnation of Christ did not give up or renounce his divinity, but gave up certain divine attributes. The “body” in verse 6 means “appearance” (Hooker 2000:507). Then, in relation to the eternal deity of Christ, the body is the outward manifestation of his divine nature.

Verses 6-8 explain the three aspects of Christ's *kenosis*: First, Christ emptied himself and became like a man. The first human, Adam, was created according to the image of God. In the phrase “human form” (σχήμα) in verse 8, “form” is a different expression than “body of God” (μορφή) in verse 6. It is not the body but the shape. It means weakness, thirst, or an expression of humanity that represents another human limitation (Walvoord 1955:105). Christ expresses himself in a human form. Therefore, the *kenosis* of Christ does not mean empty, but refers to human appearance.

Second, the emptying of Christ has the form of a slave. The emptying of Christ does not end with merely taking off the divinity and becoming human. It is the lowest figure of humanity, i.e. the shape of a slave. A slave was not considered human at the time. A slave was nothing but a possession. Thus, Paul was not viewed as a human being at the time: “A slave has the lowest position; he is powerless; he has no rights. He has no glory: no honour, only shame” (Hellerman 2003:421). In a sense, O’Brien (1991:224) rightly says that “Christ displayed the nature or form of God in the nature or form of a slave, thereby showing clearly not only what his character was like, but also what it meant to be God.” Then, the *kenosis* of Christ takes the form of the slave, which is a manifestation of total emptiness, from the sacred body of God to the human form. Ultimately, the emptiness of Christ is the highest act of nobleness, the eternal God who owns everything (2:6), but takes the form of a slave (2:7).

Third, Christ's *kenosis* is manifested as an act. The shape of a human being and the form of the slave are the ontological explanations of the *kenosis* of Christ, while verse 8 is the actual explanation of *kenosis*. It is that the *kenosis* of Christ is related to concrete obedience beyond his self-deprecation, and the extreme of his obedience is the cross. According to Hansen (2009:157), “[t]he cross served as the instrument by which Christ emptied Himself and humbled Himself.” “Christ willingly accepted the cross to fulfill his purpose for taking the form of a slave and being made in human likeness” (Hansen 2009:157). The crucifixion was

a crucial act to empty and humble Christ Himself. Then, the *kenosis* of Christ is different from the oriental philosophy or the Buddhist spirit. The voidness (空) speaks of an empty state of nothing, but the *kenosis* of Christ does not remain an abstract concept, but emerges as an act. The center of Paul's theology is his reinterpretation of Christ's *kenosis* on the cross.

The *kenosis* of Christ is not empty or not possessing anything. It will result in the filling of all with God, accomplished through His self-emptying and having nothing left of his own. It was His death on a cross (2:8). He lowered himself and was obedient unto death, even death on a cross. Paul explains His death on the cross as follows: "For as by the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, so by the one man's obedience the many will be made righteous" (Rom 5:19). Therefore, Paul interpreted the *kenosis* of Christ as a redeeming event, and not as an ontological, moral, or simply a religious act. In this sense, Paul does not focus on Christ's exaltation of 9-11, but rather on the *kenosis* of Christ in 7-8, which he interprets as the obedience of the cross.

Paul is shifting his focus to the Christ hymn by centering on Christ's emptiness. Christ emptied himself, served, and died without any promise or reward. Daniel (2009:83) says it is the most dramatic and forceful conclusion for the kenotic phase of the hymn. These kenotic acts are expressed by a slave. Paradoxically, the most subordinate form and behavior are connected by the most divine appearance and action. Because of the complete emptying of Christ, He was able to obtain an excellent name. In other words, it is not through the state of being a slave, but the appearance and the behavior itself are the state of the Lord, and that manifests in the work of salvation. It is the Lord himself who submits to the will of God until death, just as the act of the slave. The power of God is not from His pre-existence or the exaltation of Christ, but due to Christ's death on the cross. In the end, the *kenosis* of Christ becomes a pattern of behavior not only for Paul but also for the Philippians.

4.5.2 Mimesis in Philippians 3:17

Paul explains Christ's example in Philippians 2:6-11, followed by the example of the community that follows Christ's example in 2:12-18, the example of Timothy and

Epaphroditus in 2:19-20, and the example of himself in Philippians 3. In 3:17, Paul commands the members of the Philippian church to “imitate” the various models he has presented: Christ, Timothy, Epaphroditus and Paul himself. In verse 17, the imitation that Paul exhorts shows that there are three important elements: First, join in imitating me. Συμμιμηταί (“follow imitators”) is a New Testament *hapax legomenon* (Hawthorne 2004:160). It is not easy to find the exact meaning of this word in this context. It is difficult to distinguish whether the meaning is “to be something like me”, or “someone like me”, or simply to distinguish between those who are imitators. If it is synonymous with μιμητής (“imitator”), it means “to be imitators” (1 Cor 4:16). In another interpretation, if this is a noun associated with the verb that accompanies the imitation, it means “take one or both of you, or imitate me” (Betz 1967:145-153; Boer 1962:169-188). I would like to interpret the conclusion in the latter sense. Paul’s demand for imitation is not a personal example, but a common practice, because Paul’s exhortation is about the Philippian community.

Second, the object to be followed is not an individual to be desired but a plural form of “we”. “You have in us,” and “we” certainly refers to Paul’s specific co-workers in Philippians, i.e. Timothy and Epaphroditus. Therefore, the objects to be imitated by the Philippians are Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus. All of these have been imitators of Christ in the Christ hymn. Ultimately, to imitate them is to imitate the Christ they follow.

Third, what the Philippians should follow is a concrete action. Paul can find it in the words, “keep your eyes on those who walk according to the example” (Phil 3:17). It means that the ultimate goal is to act, that is, it appears as a concrete life attitude. I would like to examine the specific examples of imitation (Paul, Timothy and Epaphroditus) that Paul has already presented, and to consider these specific behaviors that the Philippians were called to emulate.

4.5.2.1 Paul: The slave of Jesus

The most prominent model that the Philippians should follow is Paul himself. The reason is that Paul resembles the image of Christ and a form of life built on Christ. Paul first speaks of Christ and Paul’s own mimesis with two concepts. First, he is a slave like Christ. The “slave”

is a term Paul used for himself (Rom 1:1; Phil 1:1), and his common description of the Christian life (Rom 7:6, 25; 12:11; Gal 5:13; Phil 2:22). In his preface to the letter, Paul introduces his identity differently depending on the content and emphasis of the letter. To the Galatians (who reject the gospel), he states, “Paul, an apostle not from men nor through man, but through Jesus Christ and God the Father” (Gal 1:1), and to introduce himself, “Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus, and Timothy our brother” (Phm 1:1). In Philippians, however, he calls himself “slaves of Christ Jesus”. “Slave Paul” is a mimesis of “slave Jesus”. Certainly, in the Christ hymn, Jesus is confessed as having “emptied himself, by taking the form of a slave”.

Second, Paul is “a prisoner”, describing his condition as “imprisonment” (1:7; 13; 14). Though the term ‘confinement’ refers to the imprisonment, it has more significance to Paul. Paul explains it as that “[his] imprisonment is for Christ” (1:13). Imprisonment is primarily for Christ which removes the focus from physical imprisonment. Therefore, it can be understood as a very positive meaning and not a negative meaning. Paul was given an opportunity to it has become known throughout the whole imperial guard and to all the rest (1:13), “having become confident in the Lord by my imprisonment, are much more bold to speak the word without fear” (1:14), “preach Christ” (1:15; 16). Paul stresses that Christ’s becoming a human-being is an opportunity to save humanity. At this point, Paul confesses that he does not lament or deny his imprisonment, but rather “rejoices” (1:18) over it. Paul’s imprisonment is more noble and precious than his own life. It is because it preaches and honours Christ. Paul confesses that “For to me to live is Christ, and to die is gain” (21).

In particular, Paul’s mimesis of Christ’s self-sacrifice is maximized through his autobiography in 3:4-11. The content is in parallel with the contours of the Christ hymn. First, verse 2:6 is an explanation of Christ’s pre-existence. Christ was before all things, and was in the noblest state being in the form of God, and equal to God. Paul begins with a description of his own preferential, if not noble, status akin to the pre-existence of Christ. In 3:5-6, Paul speaks of his own superior privilege. Paul is blameless, both in status and in social position. He was a true Hebrew of the Hebrews, and was, in particular, an Orthodox Jew, and a Pharisee.

However, Paul has forsaken the full gist of this noble self-assertion for Christ. Like the *kenosis* of Christ in 2:6-9, Paul did not use anything he possessed for his own benefit, but threw everything away as rubbish. Paul uses the ἡγέομαι (“count”) in the *kenosis* of Christ in the Christ hymn to express his own life of emptiness (7, 8). In order to emphasize that his life resembles Christ, Paul said: “Whatever gain I had, I counted as loss for the sake of Christ. Indeed, I count everything as loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ” (Phil 3:7-8).

Therefore, Christ's self-sacrifice, humility, descent, and death manifested also in Paul. It is to think of all that he possesses “as loss” and “as rubbish”. The reason Paul regards all his work as loss, tries to lose it, and considers it rubbish is “to imitate the death of Christ Jesus” (3:10). What Paul needs to imitate is not the pre-existence of Christ, nor the exaltation of Christ. It is the death of the cross, which is the sign of the *kenosis* of Christ, as Paul's example is imitated and the Philippians are to follow. Paul, who resembles Christ, is a person who forgets the past and desires the future and lives in the present. Imitation in the present life is based on the death of Christ Jesus.

4.5.2.2 Timothy: Those who worked hard for the Gospel with Paul

Paul showed in his own life his association with the *kenosis* of the Christ hymn. And now, his faithful disciples and co-workers, Timothy and Epaphroditus, show that they have a similar relation to this *kenosis*. First, in Philippians 2:19-24, Paul introduces Timothy, as an example for the Philippians to emulate. Timothy was the son of a Jewish mother, Eunice (2 Tim 1:5), and a strangely unknown father (Acts 16:1). He is described as Paul's co-worker (2 Co 1:19), colleague (Acts 17:14-15, 18: 5; 19:22; 20:4), brother (1 Col 1:1; Phm 1:1), and in various missions (1 Cor 4:17; 16:10; Phil 2:19; 23; 1 Thess 3:2; 6).

From among his many co-workers, Paul chose Timothy because he knew the circumstances of the Philippian church and followed Christ's example (Beare 1973:96). Paul's justification was that “Timothy will be genuinely concerned for your welfare” (2:20). This explains Paul's

reason for sending Timothy to them – because of his genuine concern. Paul equates Timothy with himself (Hawthorne 2004:233). Paul expresses Timothy's concern for the well-being of the Philippian church as caring for the interests of Christ. Also, Paul was now imprisoned and could not visit the Philippian church himself. That is why Paul wanted to send Timothy, his most trusted co-worker.

Paul describes the importance and specificity of his relationship with Timothy as a father-son relationship (2:22). This phrase communicates the deep and abiding relationship between the two men. The relationship between a father and son is more “genuine” (Fee 1995:266; Melick 1991:118; O’Brien 1991:319; Silva 2005:140). Timothy became a humble and obedient son. He was like a humble Christ by taking the form of a slave and obeying death (2:7-8). According to Hansen (2009), Paul uses the same language as the hymn for Christ so that his readers will know that Timothy had the same attitude or mind that Christ Jesus had (2:5). Timothy serves as a Christ-like example for the church to show what such a character looks like in everyday life (Hansen 2009:197). Timothy is a “genuine model to the Philippians. Through his explanation, Paul is rhetorically challenging the Philippians to be restored to that same genuineness” (Keown 2017:17).

Reflecting on the life of Timothy, Paul lists two things that the Philippians should follow: The first is that Timothy is “a man who does not seek his own interests but the work of Jesus” (2:21). On the contrary, there were many people in the Philippian church who “seek their own interests, not those of Jesus Christ.” They are “those who do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves” (2:3). In other words, they are Paul’s opponents who divide the Philippian church, and do not have the heart of Christ.

In contrast, Timothy “does not seek his own work but asks for the work of Christ Jesus” (Phil 2:21). This means, “the one who empties himself” like Christ (2:7). By emptying oneself and being filled with Jesus, Timothy was able to become a seeker for the work of Christ Jesus. Timothy suffered many sufferings like the *kenosis* of Christ. Paul labels it with the word δοκιμή (“tested/proven”).

Δοκιμή (“tested/proven”) is translated as “podium” (Rom 5:4, 2:22) or “proof” (2 Cor 2:9, 9:13, 13:3) or “trials” (2 Cor 8:2). In particular, Paul used δοκιμή (“tested/proven”) as a symbolic term for the cross by using the word “evidence” or “trial”. It means that Timothy “has served with me in the gospel” (2:22b). This is evidence that Timothy resembles Paul completely (by father-son relationship), and also wholly resembles Christ. Paul used the father-son relationship to describe Timothy as a subject that the Philippians should follow.

4.5.2.3 Epaphroditus: The soldier of Christ

Paul suggests in Philippians 2:25-30 that the model of Epaphroditus is to be imitated by the Philippians. In his description of Epaphroditus Paul refers to him, among others, with the concept of “soldier” (2:25). There are many military and political terms in Philippians. The reason for this is that the city of Philippi was colonized by Octavian after the battle of Actium in 31 BCE. In 1:27, when Paul exhorts the Philippians, he says, “only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ”. The word “πολίτευμα” means “commonwealth”. In 1:27-3:21, Paul exhorts the Philippians to provide a way to live worthy as a citizen of God. From this point of view, a general conveys guidelines to his subordinates on how to act correctly in his absence: the union of the congregation in 1:27-30, the various military terms in 2:1-3:21, and the exhortation in 2:1-4. A wise general is a person who favorably guides people to become brothers, friends to friends, lovers to be lovers (Krenz 2003:355). Obedience and self-immolation can also be understood in this context.

Paul introduces Epaphroditus as “my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, and your messenger and minister to my need” (2:25). In particular, the meaning of “fellow worker and fellow soldier” refers to comrades who share life and death. Epaphroditus was the one who sent Paul from the Philippian church to help. He lived with Paul in captivity and worked as a minister of the gospel. However, he was ill and near his own death (2:27) because of the gospel of Christ, but was restored by the mercy of God. In that, Epaphroditus was a man who “nearly died for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was lacking in your service to me” (2:30). As O’Brien (1991:343) notes, “This repetition is no doubt deliberate, with Epaphroditus presented Christ and emphasizes his worthiness of imitation, honour and

celebration.” As this passage reveals, this structure explicitly identifies Epaphroditus with Christ. It emphasizes, honour and worthiness of celebration (Keown 2017:62). It is like Timothy “to save his work, but to seek the work of Christ Jesus” (2:21).

Epaphroditus joined Paul in his preaching ministry by serving Paul. He devoted his life to the work and as a result nearly died. Paul presents Epaphroditus who followed Christ’s self-sacrifice in the Christ hymn as an exemplary model. Epaphroditus was a striking example of self-sacrifice, as he abandoned the most important things like Timothy and Christ. He exemplified extreme suffering with his self-emptying like Christ. He suffered like a prisoner, just like Paul, and was devoted to the work of Christ until he became sick and almost died. It is the same as a military command and the life of a common life, as Paul introduced Epaphroditus to “follow worker and fellow soldier,” and that was what the Philippians should emulate. In the end, Paul suggests to imitate Christ's heart and follow Timothy and Epaphroditus. Timothy and Epaphroditus imitated the life of Christ. They are already doing what He ordered. They are those who give up and work for the gospel. In the end, Timothy and Epaphroditus were similar to Christ and are presented as models to follow.

4.6 Conclusion

Paul used the notions of kenosis and mimesis to clearly teach the Philippians and resolve their confusion. Kenosis was received from the Christ hymn before Paul, and mimesis was obtained from the concepts commonly used at the educational, governing, and religious levels in the Greek world at that time (Marrou 1982). However, Paul emphasized the “death on the cross of Christ” in the concept of kenosis, thus making concrete the cenotaph and clarifying the object of mimesis. Therefore, when Paul said that he and his co-workers should be imitated (Phil 3:17), what the Philippians should follow is not the ontology and “self-immolation of Christ”, but the “death of the cross of Christ”. In addition, Paul also uses the relationship of the general/soldier (Epaphroditus), the father/son (Timothy), and the master/slave relationship (Paul) for correct mimesis.

Kenosis and mimesis are closely connected, and play an important role in proving the unity of Philippians. The basis of and motivation for imitation lies in the Christ hymn and provides the specifics to be followed, not only for the Philippians, but also for all Christians. There are two major implications: The first is that the mimesis that Paul exhorts is imitating the concrete act of “death on the cross,” and not just the “self-immolation of Christ”. The crucifixion and death of Christ was a historical event in the Roman history. Jesus’ death by crucifixion was one of the worst forms of execution that took place in the Roman Empire. Death on a cross was a political, economic, ideological, and religiously motivated event. Timothy, Epaphroditus, and Paul, are examples of those who have followed the pattern of Christ, and walked the path of the cross for the gospel sake.

Second, the result of mimesis is not death but resurrection. The object of mimesis is the death of the cross of Christ, but the result is the resurrection. Paul says in Philippians 3:21: “Who will transform our lowly body to be like his glorious body, by the power that enables him even to subject all things to himself.” The Christ hymn is expressed after the death on the cross, as follows: “Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name” (Phil 2:9). Therefore, life imitated by the crucifixion of Christ is the only way to obtain the glory of the resurrection. The glory does not mean a transcendent state only. The glory of Christ does not only mean a transcendental state. According to the Christ hymn, the glory is the declaration that Christ, who died on the cross, becomes the Lord (2:10). The declaration that Christ who died on the cross, not the Roman emperor, becomes the Lord, the ruler of the world, is very radical. From the world’s viewpoint, the death on the cross, which is the result of the most helpless and miserable life, appears as the most powerful force. The glory, the resurrection, is to “reign” in the world (Rom 5:17).

Paul presents the obedience of Christ as a basic virtue in the hymn, so that it would give the Philippians a life lesson to practice. He appeals to them to imitate Christ's actions. Paul's attitude of a good life, taught in Phil 2:2-4, is consistent with the image of Christ Jesus in Phil 2:6-9. Therefore, if Philippians want to follow the example of the Lord (Phil 2:11; 1 Thess 1:6), they should deal with each other and join the Lord’s sufferings and glory with him (Phil 2:9-11, 3:11, 20-21; 2 Tim 2:11-13; Mt 18:4). To this end, Paul presents the basic goal of life through the imitation of Christ, and obedience to God’s will. Christ, who appears in the hymn,

is the perfect example of behavior for all Christians. Paul himself has lived a life of connectedness between kenosis and mimesis, and urges all Christians, Timothy and Epaphroditus, not just their co-workers, to walk in the same way that they walked (1 Cor 4:16). In the end, Paul persuades the Philippians through the motif of imitating, as he himself imitates Jesus Christ.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

In this thesis, I have dealt with the structural unity and thematic coherence of Philippians. Although there are numerous discussions on the unity of Philippians in the current literature, I have tried to provide evidence for the unity of Philippians based on existing research. I have therefore sought to address the following questions: Is Philippians a letter? Is it a composite of two or more letters? And, how does the rhetorical function of imitation appear throughout Philippians?

The methodology that was followed to answer the above questions was derived from Tolmie's (2005) rhetorical approach. Paul not only conformed to the literature practices of the time, but also followed the practices of Greco-Roman rhetoric in order to communicate with his audience. It is important to know that Tolmie's method also makes use of classical rhetoric categories, even though it does not structurally rely on these categories. For this reason, I analyzed Philippians using the methodology of rhetorical analysis, which supported the integrity of Philippians. Paul used rhetorical metaphors to relay his intended message and communicate effectively with the Philippians. There is a considerable difference between existing rhetorical methodologies and Tolmie's methodology. In seeking to analyze Paul's argumentation, Tolmie's methodology makes use of a text-centered approach, where the letter itself serves as a starting point for the analysis.

I discovered the function and role of imitation in Philippians 3. The theme of imitation, as used by Paul, was an important rhetorical strategy, which played a significant role in demonstrating the unity of Philippians. Paul used the theme of imitation as a medium to convey his message and exhort the Philippians. His exhortation was not abstract, but based on a specific pattern of behavior derived from the hymn. More specifically, it is a remedial form of action based on the cross of Christ upon which he emptied himself. Paul's message is for all believers in all ages to imitate this form.

Paul used the theme of imitation to illustrate to the Philippians how to live a life of imitation. To get to the stage where he himself could persuade the Philippians, he first had to live a life of connectedness between kenosis and mimesis, and then led the way not only for his co-workers Timothy and Epaphroditus, but also for all Christians.

A brief summary of the main points of each chapter follows: In Chapter 2, the unity of the text was analyzed in more detail. Although there are numerous discussions about the unity of the letter in circulation, I sought to prove the unity of Philippians based on the insights of previous reputable studies. As the study progressed, it soon became clear that there was strong evidence to support the multiple-letter theory, but that there was also conclusive evidence against it. First, there is a dispersion (3:1-1), but it is a rhetorical strategy and sufficient to deal with other topics. Second, there is no manuscript that functions as conclusive proof. There is no definitive proof of a copy, which intimates that Philippians was a different type of letter. Third, it is difficult to isolate some parts of the letter from other parts. This is because consistent terms, etymologies, and motives are used throughout Philippians. Fourth, if 3:1 is in harmony with 4:4, then Philippians 3 is regarded as an independent letter. It is therefore difficult to ascertain why these passages were positioned where they were, breaking its unity.

Based on the above reasons, I adopted the single-letter theory in this study. Literary factors were used to support this view, especially thematic unification and literary devices that intentionally combine the various parts of Philippians. More specifically, I explained that access to Philippians from the rhetorical point of view would be difficult to maintain in the multiple-letter theory. Paul used Greco-Roman rhetoric practices in his letter and proposed that insertion could be fully explained by rhetorical practices.

Paul's clear rhetorical goal was discussed in Chapter 3. There are two obvious rhetorical situations in Philippians 3. There is a warning to the Jews and an exhortation to the recipients to follow Paul's example. Paul's opponents, the Jews, accepted that righteousness was by means of circumcision and the law; both were necessary to become more perfect in Christ. They therefore insisted on circumcision. In this rhetorical situation, Paul explained the

meaning of being God's people to the Philippians (Phil 3) and the meaning of suffering by using the most effective form of argument. Paul responds to the opponent (3:2) by suggesting his views in 3:3-16. These two positions are distinguished by those who follow the pattern of the cross and those who do not (17-18). Paul strongly urges the Philippians to imitate the pattern of the cross. He also clearly indicates the better of the two options, by comparing the end result (20-21).

Paul uses the important theme of imitation to achieve his rhetorical goals. The theme of imitations also fundamental to overcoming the situation faced by the Philippians and central to understanding the structure of Philippians. Paul uses imitation as a rhetorical weapon to attack his opponents. It is also used as a medium to convey Paul's exhortation to the Philippians.

In his appeal to the Philippians to follow the example of Christ, Paul describes himself as a representative example to follow, and describes the meaning of a life worthy of the gospel of Christ. The Philippians should beware of those who do not follow the example of Christ (3:2). Instead, they are to emulate Paul, an authentic model of the way of truthfulness, who follows Christ by remembering the meaning of the cross. Paul suggests the pattern of Christ first, but also offers himself as an example to follow. The parallel examples of Christ and Paul are two important elements to prove this theme. In particular, in the Christ hymn (2:6-11), Paul describes that he is a follower of Christ's pattern (3:4-11). This shows the nature of imitation. Paul recognized Christ as a source of imitation – He gave up his privilege, took the form of a slave, and was obedient unto death on the cross. Herein, I found the link between kenosis and mimesis, which was foundational for the contents of chapter 4.

Chapter 4 recognizes the life of Paul as exemplar (3:4-11) as a follower of the pattern of the kenosis expressed in the hymn (2:6-11). A pattern of descent-death-exaltation is found in the Christ hymn. Likewise, this pattern appears in Paul's life as possession-loss-resurrection of desire. Reflecting of the life of Christ, Paul shows how he is imitating Christ.

Paul used the notions of *kenosis* and *mimesis* to illuminate the minds of the Philippians and show them the pattern of Christ that he himself pursues. Paul emphasized the concept of *kenosis* by stressing the death of Christ on the cross. Therefore, Paul's exhortation was not an abstraction of Christ's emptiness. It is specifically referring to "Christ's death on the cross." Paul clearly stipulates the correct pattern of conduct for the Philippians to emulate. To illustrate his point further, Paul provides a few additional examples of exemplar patterns of behavior, i.e. Timothy and Epaphroditus.

I confidently assert that the two concepts of *kenosis* and *mimesis* are core elements of Paul's theology in Philippians. *Kenosis* and *mimesis* were the final exhortations to the Philippians. The Philippians were exhorted to follow Christ, more specifically, the specific act of death on the cross and to walk the path of the cross of Christ.

This is a call for cognitive transition (3:7-9) and the new creation order (3:3). For those who do not follow Christ's example, failing to imitate the life of Christ is accompanied by anxiety, suffering, and loss. However, as demonstrated by the pattern of the cross of Christ in which God's reverse action is manifest (2:5-11), it is in fact safe (3:1) and accompanied by an experience of the resurrection power in the present life (3:10). In addition, the ultimate benefit is the experience of "bodily transformation" and "perfection" (3:21) in the future. Here, the function of imitation parallels the death of Christ (3:10) and encourages the Philippian community to educate themselves regarding the example and meaning of the life of Christ for their lives. In light of the above discussions, will you follow Paul's example or will you follow the example of the opponent? Will you be willing to accept suffering or will you avoid it? Are you prepared to follow the example of Christ? You have to choose one or the other.

Even today, we often seek mentors or role models, and people to imitate, especially during tough times. But where does one find a suitable model to emulate? The world and the church have different expectations of the ideal role model. If believers look outside of the church, they are no different from Paul's opponents in Philippians. This is because the self-emptying, self-sacrificing character of Jesus Christ presented in Philippians is the prototype of imitation

that we should follow. Doing so will help the church grow spiritually, remain united in the faith, and stay committed to one another until the day when Christ comes again.

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